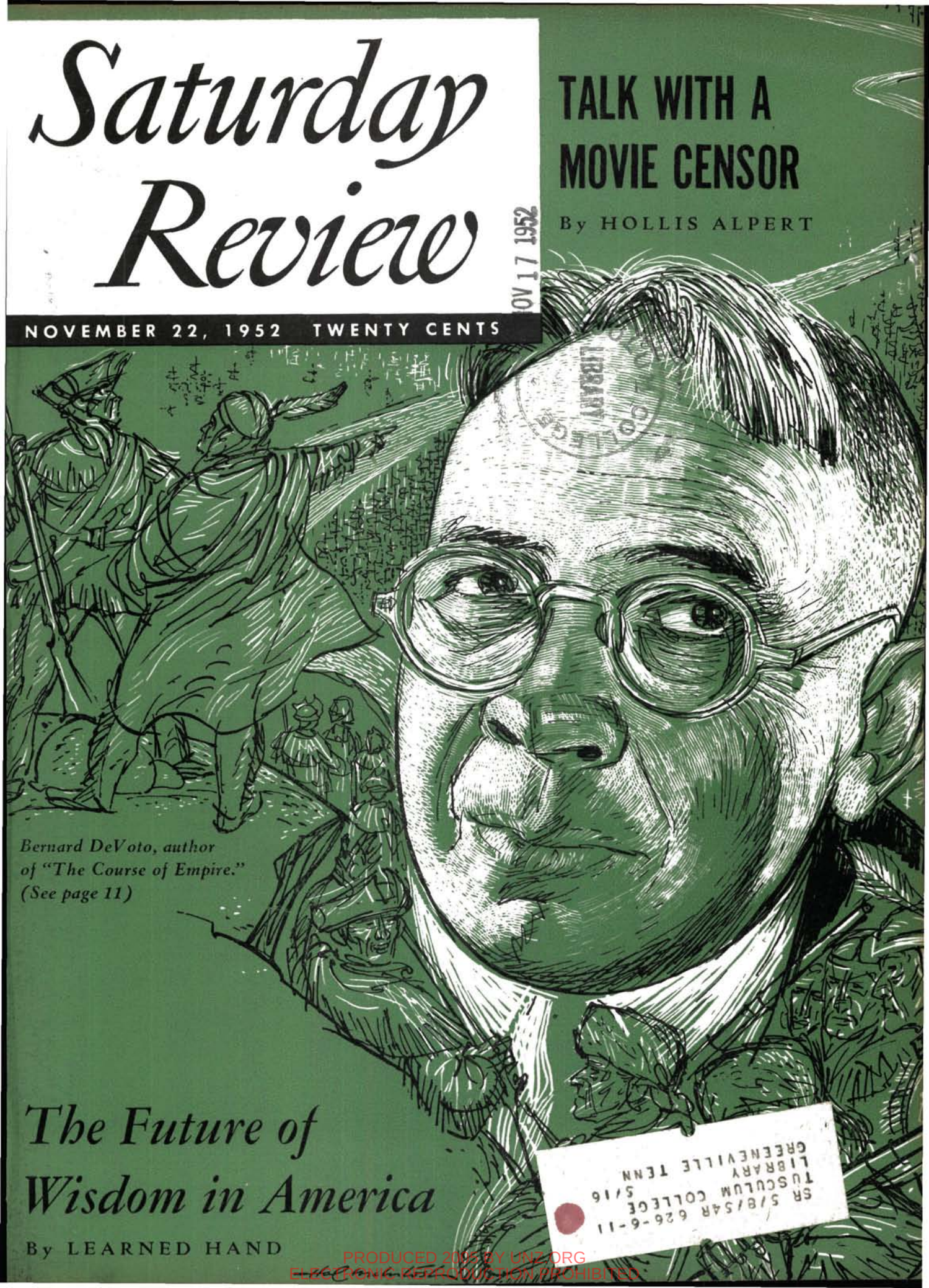
Saturday Review

NOV 17 1952

NOVEMBER 22, 1952 TWENTY CENTS

TALK WITH A MOVIE CENSOR

By HOLLIS ALPERT



Bernard DeVoto, author of "The Course of Empire." (See page 11)

The Future of Wisdom in America

By LEARNED HAND

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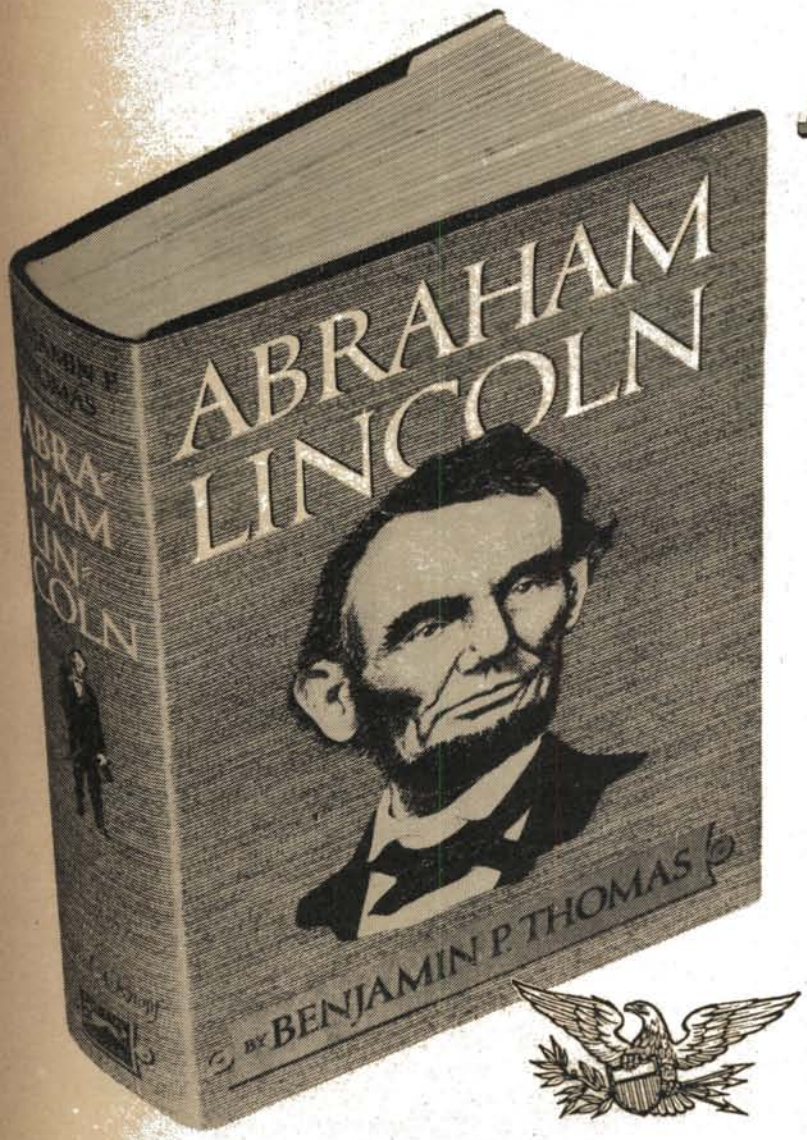

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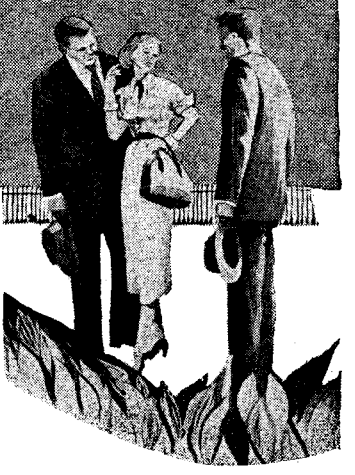

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I SOMETIMES THINK that the finest music I ever heard was that played by the organist at the Avalon Theatre at Saturday matinees during the days of silent pictures. Since then the movies have come a long way to the present period of Cinerama, Italian imports, and Marilyn Monroe; but today whenever I hear a pipe organ (now, alas, usually E. Power Biggs playing Bach), I often wonder—and this without prejudice either to Miss Monroe or Mr. Bach—whether the movies haven't come too far.

¶ I am prompted to these reflections by a new Doubleday autobiography, TWO REELS AND A CRANK, by Albert E. Smith, in collaboration with Phil A. Koury. Smith might be termed "the first tycoon." For, at the age of 20, he was a co-founder of the Vitagraph Company, and his book shines with such lustrous names as Valentino, the Talmadges, John Bunny. He was also one of the first newsreel cameramen. He went up San Juan Hill with the Rough Riders, covered the Boer War with Richard Harding Davis, and once jumped out of a window to escape an irate Jim Jeffries.

¶ His book reads as though it were written to be read to the accompaniment of organ music, from "The William Tell Overture" to "Hearts and Flowers." His stories, and the pictures that illustrate them, will take you back to *your* Saturday afternoons.

ONE MOMENT, PLEASE, WHILE WE CHANGE REELS

¶ Thanks to our friend television, a whole new generation is getting to know the older movies—in addition to the older jokes. While TV hasn't quite got back to Albert Smith's silent films, I'm not sure it wouldn't be a good idea. At least, it would make television easier to read by. And I'll give a free copy of TWO REELS AND A CRANK for the best letter of any length on "The Silent Movie I'd Like Most To See Again." Write me at Doubleday, 575 Madison Avenue, New York 22.

L. L. Day
EDITOR-AT-LARGE

(Advertisement)

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Good News

▶ A typical charge continually made in Soviet-dominated publications is the following from the Prague newspaper *Kvety*: "To buy a 'progressive library' (Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and other Communist writers) or even to borrow such books from a public library is absolutely impossible in the United States. Purges of American libraries have been carried out so thoroughly that not a single free idea is to be found."

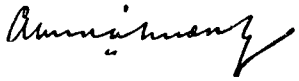
However, on October 3, the trustees of the Boston Public Library voted 3-2 to continue to make Communist publications available in the Library's reading rooms. The decision was reached after twenty-five prominent Boston citizens "supported the library's stand that subversive literature should be at the disposal of intelligent citizens." The majority report stated: "The public must be afforded an opportunity in a great library to have facilities to learn both sides of any controversial question of importance to the end that an enlightened public opinion may, in our great democracy, arrive at wise decisions for the welfare of the people and of the nation."

▶ The tuberculosis fatality rate in New York City in September was the lowest ever recorded by the Department of Health for a single month. Health spokesmen have attributed marked declines in the 1952 monthly death rate to "better treatment," including the use of new anti-TB drugs such as isonicotinic acid hydrazide and streptomycin.

▶ More than 200,000 farms in the U. S. were electrified during the year ending June 30, bringing the percentage of electrified farms in the nation to 88.1, an increase from 84.2 per cent a year ago.

▶ Five years ago a group of students at Rutgers University organized a fraternity, Gamma Sigma, in which persons of all colors, creeds, and nationalities were eligible for membership. University officials recently termed the experiment a resounding success. They said it showed that a fraternity could thrive without the customary "restrictive clauses." Gamma Sigma's membership is divided among members of the three major faiths and many nationalities—Chinese, Japanese, Cuban, Albanian, and German—are represented. The fraternity president, Howard Cook, a Negro premedical student, feels that Gamma Sigma has shown that all sorts of people can live together.

"Hundreds of thousands of Americans have read *Kristin Lavransdatter* with pleasure but few of them realize Sigrid Undset wrote another (and in some ways perhaps even greater) historical novel set in her beloved middle ages. In the hope of winning for *The Master of Hestviken* the sort of hearing it has always deserved, I have just published this magnificent new edition consisting of *The Axe*, *The Snake Pit*, *In the Wilderness*, and *The Son Avenger*. It is a handsome volume of 994 pages designed by W. A. Dwiggins and completely reset. At its present price* it is the fiction bargain of the year. I urge you to buy a copy now."



THE MASTER OF HESTVIKEN

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TRADE Winds

BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS!

CENTER OF the Catskill "Borscht Circuit," which ripened the talents of such greats of the entertainment world as Danny Kaye, Moss Hart, Dore Schary, Don Hartman, Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, and Robert Merrill, is the fabulous Grossinger's. It began as a tiny boardinghouse in 1914; today, still run by the founding family, it is a huge year-round establishment with a staff of five hundred, serving more than 25,000 well-heeled and often nationally famous guests annually. It has its own million-dollar airport, indoor skating rink, championship eighteen-hole golf course, theatre, and Olympic swimming pool—and probably the most wonderful food served at any hotel in the whole wide world. The

story of Grossinger's is told in a heart-warming and glowing fashion by Harold Taub in "Waldorf in the Catskills," just published by Sterling. . . . It was a young lady who had eaten too much at Grossinger's who turned up at the Oppenheimer Brothers in answer to their ad for a private secretary. Her references were excellent, but the brothers did not enthuse after she waddled out. "I don't think she'll do," said Brother Walter. "There's too much of her in the first place." Brother Bobby added, "That goes for the second place, too!". . . . The legendary Jennie Grossinger acted on the principle that there always was a brighter side to everything. As G. K. Chesterton once noted, sour critics who ridiculed the "exaggerated" representation of human optimism and benevolence in writers like Dickens were usually the first to accept without question equal exaggerations in the opposite direction from the Zola and Dostoievsky schools. And it was Rabelais who advised, "Better to write of laughter than of tears, because to laugh is proper to a man."

MOST ETIQUETTE BOOKS these days are rewrites of Emily Post, aimed at mail-order audiences of social climbers and pathetic drones who dream of becoming society queens overnight, but Amy Vanderbilt has come up with a new one that strikes out in a variety of unexplored bypaths. Here is the correct procedure for addressing presidents, cardinals, cantors in an orthodox synagogue, bashful moppets, and belligerent drunks who are busting the furniture. Want to know how to get rid of a dreary bore on your right at dinner so you can get the ear of the glamour puss on your left, presently monopolized by Irwin Edman? Are you hep to what your butler should wear when Lucius Beebe comes for dinner? Have you a proper speech ready when a lady launching a new cruiser loses her control and bops your head instead of the ship's bow with her champagne bottle? Is there a birth, debut, marriage, trial separation, or bris meelah in your future that must be announced in the modern manner? Keep a copy of Amy's "Complete Book of Etiquette" at hand and be prepared for all emergencies! . . . There's the usual profusion of new cookbooks on my desk, too, but being a proverbial sucker for *gedaemfter Rinderbrust mit Apfel muss und Kartoffel pfannkuchen,* I like the one from Lüchow's best. Lüchow's is the old-fashioned, *gemütlich* restaurant on Fourteenth Street where people who appreciate wonderful German cooking have been fressing for three generations.

FOUR THINGS DEEPLY CHERISHED by people of the theatre are pay checks, front-page publicity, the right tables at "21," Shor's, and Sardi's, and the weekly issue of *Variety*—not necessarily in the order named. Fattest of all *Varietys* is the Anniversary Number, published every January, for

which the canny Abel Green, who was editor when other lads of his age still were sucking lollipops and playing one o'cat, cons the greats of Broadway and Hollywood—or their ghost writers—into contributing nostalgic memoirs or titillating anecdotes. Henry Holt, wallowing in profits from Green's and Laurie's 1951 collaboration, "Show

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Biz," has now "persuaded" Abel to assemble the best of all these anniversary essays in a bumper volume called "Spice of Variety." Step up and read Fred Allen and Arthur Kober, Jack Benny and Irv Kupcinet, Ethel Barrymore and Earl Wilson, Gypsy Rose Lee and Maurice Zolotow, Groucho Marx and Groucho Jean Nathan, etc., etc., etc.—all for the price of a single admission! . . . Other books your hard-pressed correspondent is pining to get around to are Al Capp's

"The Life and Times of Li'l Abner" (with a foreword by John Steinbeck), Evan Esar's "The Humor of Humor," Corey Ford's "Every Dog Should Have a Man," Donald Sheean's "This Was Publishing," and Stanton Griffis's "Lying in State" (the memoirs of the only gent on record who still retains both wit and a bankroll after owning a chain of retail bookstores for a decade).

MUSIC: In "Fun with Musical Games and Quizzes" David Ewen and Nicolas Slonimsky quote two excerpts from contemporary reviews of musical compositions that later became famous. You wouldn't guess what pieces were on the griddle in a thousand tries! Number One: "It has no more real pretension to be called music than the jangling and clashing of gongs and other uneuphonious instruments with which the Chinaman, on the brow of the hill, fondly thought to scare away our English bluejackets." (From *The London Musical World*, June 30, 1855). Number Two: "This music is only half alive. How trite and feeble and conventional the tunes are, how sentimental and vapid the harmonic treatment, under its disguise of fussy and futile counterpoint! Weep over the lifelessness of its melody and harmony, so derivative, so stale, so inexpressive." (Lawrence Gilman in the *New York Tribune*, February 23, 1924.) Well, *The London Musical World* was reviewing Wagner's "Lohengrin"; Mr. Gilman was polishing off George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." . . . Jascha Heifetz's father liked to tell about the first concert his son played in public. It was at the Imperial Music School at Vilna, and six-year-old Jascha played the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto. His little hands were very hot, and in the middle of the piece the bow slipped to the floor.

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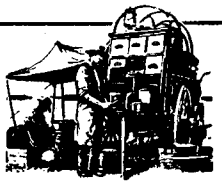

By RAMON F. ADAMS, author of WESTERN WORDS. Full of anecdotes, range recipes, tall tales, and true stories. "Let it be said now that Mr. Adams has done a superlative job and that his illustrator, Nick Eggenhofer, has captured in his sketches the real spirit of the round-up camp. This book is more than grand reading. It perpetuates the memory of a vanished craftsman and fills a long existent deficiency in the literature of the West."—*N. Y. Times Book Review.* *$3.75*

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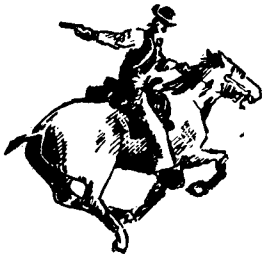

Echoes from the Wild Frontier

By OREN ARNOLD. Sixteen exciting episodes that occurred at the time when the six-shooter and the noose were the law of the land. Included are dramatic accounts of the Black Ghosts of Bisbee, the Barony of Arizona, Judge Roy Bean, and other gusty tales of the wild frontier—of bandits, feuds, Indians, and even of the camels which caused cattle to stampede and drunks to reform. *Illustrated, $3.75*

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By C. L. SONNICHSEN. "Here's a report on the cattleman of today. Full of fact, beautifully written and packed with anecdotes of the West, it's a major contribution to Rocky Mountain Empire literature. Top reading."—*Denver Post.* *$4.50*

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Jascha recovered it so quickly that he didn't miss one note of the concerto! "That's when I was sure," boasted his father, "that my son was a prodigy!"

THE SATURDAY REVIEW'S own Roland Gelatt has signed with Lippincott for a comprehensive history of the phonograph and recordings, covering the seventy-five-year period from the earliest Edison cylinders to the latest long-playing albums. Publication is scheduled for the fall of 1953. . . . The University of Pennsylvania Press has done itself proud with Alfred Bendiner's "Music to My Eyes," remarkable caricatures, with witty accompanying notes, of the big brass of the musical world. . . . An old and broken down conductor (not included in the Bendiner volume) made an ill-starred farewell tour in America. After the debacle at Carnegie Hall the first violinist was asked, "What did he conduct tonight?" The violinist answered, "Lord knows what *he* conducted—but we played Tchaikovsky's Fifth."

WELL-KNOWN AUTHORS continually are being importuned to bang out a brief article, speech, or foreword for preoccupied friends. When they comply the same problem always arises. Should they name a fee themselves or wait for the recipient to come across with a respectable token of gratitude? Harken to a tale told on himself by columnist Bob Considine.

Early in his journalistic career Bob toiled for the late "Cissy" Patterson on the *Washington Times-Herald.* Shortly after he left her employ to seek greater fame in Manhattan she phoned him to report that she had just had a whopper of a fight with her brother, Captain Joe Patterson, over a piece he had authored in his *New York News.* She wanted Considine to ghost-write a full-page answer she proposed to run over her signature in the *Times-Herald.*

Bob tore off a honey and air-mailed it to her. She called the next morning to enthuse, "It's exactly what I wanted, Bob, and I insist on paying you for it. How much do you want?" "Shucks," deprecated Bob. "I don't want anything at all. I did it for an old friend." "Nonsense," insisted Cissy. "Let's settle it this way. I'll give you exactly what you received for your last piece in *Cosmopolitan.* How much was it?" "Seven hundred and fifty bucks," answered Considine, "but I still wish you'd forget the whole thing."

Two days later Considine received a check from Mrs. Patterson with a note in longhand attached thereto. The check was for $500. The note read, "Dear Bob: I called *Cosmopolitan.*"

—BENNETT CERF.

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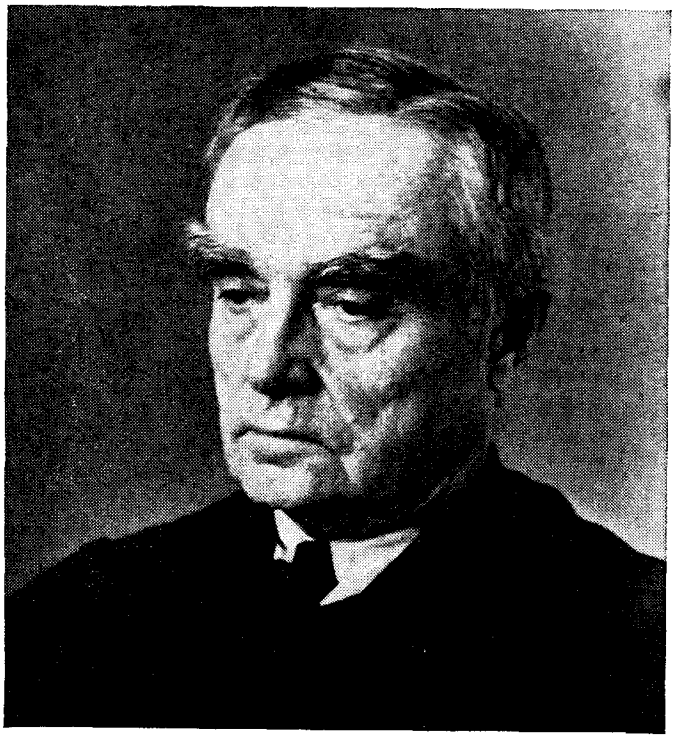
The Saturday Review

NOVEMBER 22, 1952

The Future of Wisdom in America

LEARNED HAND



Learned Hand: ". . . if we are to escape, we must not yield a foot upon demanding a fair field, and an honest race, to all ideas."

Four weeks ago Judge Learned Hand gave an address before the Board of Regents, State of New York, which attracted nationwide attention. Believing that his words deserve as wide an audience as possible, the editors feel privileged to publish the article above, drawn from his address. Judge Hand is one of America's most respected jurists. In 1950, as judge in the Second Circuit Court in New York, he wrote the famous opinion affirming the conviction of eleven Communist leaders.

MOST parts of the Constitution are specific enough to be treated like other legal commands; when we have to decide their meaning, we can proceed just as in the case of a dispute over the meaning of a statute; we look to their history and their setting with confidence that these will disclose their purpose. And that also applies to a large part of the amendments themselves. For instance, no general cultural background is needed to reach a right opinion as to whether a statute has infringed the provision that the accused must be tried in the district where the crime was committed, or that he must be "confronted" by "the witnesses against him."

But the situation is quite different when we are dealing with the broad clauses on which the conduct of a free society must in the end depend. What is "freedom of speech and of the press"; what is the "establishment of religion and the free exercise thereof"; what are "unreasonable searches," "due process of law," and "equal protection of the law"? All these are left wholly undefined and cannot be effectively determined without some acquaintance with what men in the past have thought and felt to be their most precious interests. Indeed, these fundamental canons are not jural concepts at all, in the ordinary sense; and in application they turn out to be no more than admonitions of moderation, as appears from the varying and contradictory interpretations that the judges themselves find it necessary to put upon them. Nor can we leave to courts the responsibility of construing and so of enforcing them, for the powers of courts are too limited to reach the more controversial questions that arise under them.

For, as you know, courts will not intervene—or at least they constantly avow that they should not—unless the action challenged infringes the Constitution beyond any fair dispute. While there are any plausible arguments in support of a measure, they must abstain; and so it results that in much the larger part of such controversies it is the voters, speaking through their delegates, who have the final word and the final responsibility; and that in the end it is they, and they alone, who can and will preserve our liberties, if preserved they are to be. For their guidance there are no *vade mecums*, no handbooks, no manuals; they must depend upon such enlightenment as they can muster from within, and upon their conscience, so far as they have one. That enlightenment and that conscience they may indeed find in divine revelation; but when they do, they tap sources that I am not qualified to discuss; not any better qualified than I am to discuss what doctrines are inherent in the nature of man in society. I know of none of either sort, nor can I find direction from those who profess to know. It is because I am shorn of such resort that, to me at any rate, there appears to be no escape in each situation from balancing the conflicting interests at stake with as detached a temper as we can achieve.

A constitution, a statute, a regulation, a rule—in short, a "law" of any kind—is at once a prophecy and a choice. It is a prophecy, because it attempts to forecast what will be its effects; whom it will benefit and in what ways; on whom its impact will prove a burden; how much friction and discontent will arise from the adjustments that conformity to it will require; how completely it can be enforced; what enforcement will cost; how far it will interfere with other projects or existing activities; and, in general, the whole manifold of its indirect consequences. A thoroughgoing and dependable knowledge of these is obviously impossible. For example, although we can anticipate with some degree of assurance who will pay a steeply graded income tax and in what amounts, there is no way to tell what its indirect effects will be: what activities of the taxpayers in the higher

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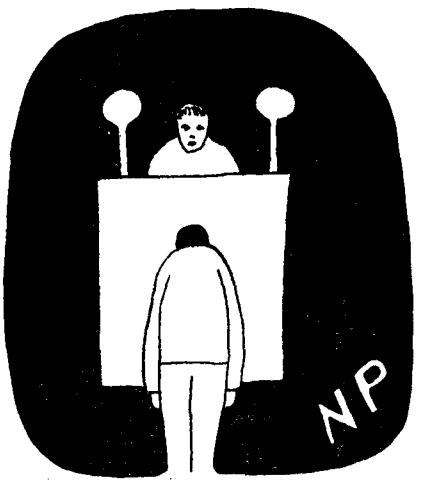
brackets it will depress; if they do not work so hard, in what way they will occupy their newly acquired leisure; how any new activities they may substitute will affect others; whether this will be offset by a loss of the mellowed maturity and the wisdom of those who withdraw. Such prophecies infest law of every sort, the more deeply as it is far reaching; and it is an illusion to suppose that there are formulas or statistics that will help in making them. They can rest upon no more than enlightened guesses; but these are likely to be successful as they are made by those whose horizons have been widened, and whose outlook has been clarified, by knowledge of what men have striven to do, and how far their hopes and fears have been realized. There is no substitute for an open mind, enriched by reading and the arts.

So much for what I have called the element of prophecy; refractory as it is, at least it depends only upon facts, however inaccessible. There remains the much more difficult element of choice. In such inquiries, as I have said, I see no escape from a calculus of, and balance between, the group interests—that is, the desires and values—whose conflict the measure under consideration is an attempt to adjust. But desires and values are not quantitatively measureable, for they seldom have any common constituents, and without these they cannot be objectively compared. On the other hand, an individual has the necessary means in his own case, for, although his personal desires and values are absolute, irreducible, and undeducible, and have just that authority which he feels them to have, he has as authoritative a competence to compare them and to prefer one to another as he has to appraise them separately. Thus, although such preferences are themselves as final as the desires and values, it would be easy to choose between the desires and values of con-



flicting social groups, if we could safely impute to them our own preferences.

But by what right can we do so; and, if we cannot, what other means of vicarious choice have we? I submit that we have none except in so far as we can imaginatively project ourselves into the position of the groups between which we must choose. Surely I need not dilate upon how hard it is to do that. Even in our own affairs how often have we tried to anticipate how we shall feel on a future occasion, only to be surprised by the unexpected difference when it comes to pass. And if it is hard to foreshadow our own feelings, how much harder is it to do so for others. It is not enough to be personally detached, although that is of course a condition; we must also acquire a capacity for an informed sympathy with, and understanding of, the desires and the values of others; and that, I submit, only those have any chance of attaining whose experience is supplemented by some acquaintance, the wider the better, with what others have thought and felt in circumstances as near as possible to those of the groups in question.

I DARE hope that it may now begin to be clearer why I am arguing that an education which includes the "humanities" is essential to political wisdom. By "humanities" I especially mean history; but close beside history and of almost, if not quite, equal importance are letters, poetry, philosophy, the plastic arts, and music. Most of the issues that mankind sets out to settle, it never does settle. They are not solved, because, as I have just tried to say, they are incapable of solution properly speaking, being concerned with incommensurables. At any rate, even if that be not always true, the opposing parties seldom do agree upon a solution; and the dispute fades into the past unsolved, though perhaps it may be renewed as history and fought over again. It disappears, because it is replaced by some compromise that, although not wholly acceptable to either side, offers a tolerable substitute for victory; and he who would find the substitute needs an endowment as rich as possible in experience, an experience which makes the heart generous and provides his mind with an understanding of the hearts of others.

The great moderates of history were more often than not men of that sort, steeped like Montaigne and Erasmus in knowledge of the past. Let me quote from one of these, our own Franklin. After long, and at times bitter, controversy the final draft of the Constitution was accepted on Saturday, September 12, and was sent to be engrossed over the week end. Nevertheless, there was still doubt about what might happen on Monday when the delegates were to sign. On Sunday Franklin wrote out a statement which Wilson read for him the next day. It is too long to quote in extenso, but I cannot forbear a sentence or two, so appropriate is it to what I am trying to say: "I agree to this Constitution with all its faults, if they are such, because I think a general Government necessary for us and there is no form of Government but what may be a blessing to the people if well administered, and believe further that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in Despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall have become so corrupted as to need despotic Government, being incapable of any other. I

(*Continued on page* 55)

Orphans of the Nineteenth Century

By Peter Viereck

YOU burst the bounds and lost the crumbling highway.
"Progress" and "self-fulfilment" were your toys.
Without a chart, like singing care-free boys,
Without a goal, you ran through every by-way.

Now you are older. Were you really free?
The night grows colder. Where are love and home?
Now seek the center; now unlearn to roam.
No more becoming: you must learn to be.

When every hour new banners are unfurled,
Choose you the changeless, which each change renewed.
Stand in the center, and with certitude
Stare from the center through the staring world.

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History. It seems that history is a record of lessons by which men fail to profit. These lessons are sometimes bloody, sometimes inspiring, but always intriguing. The job of keeping the record straight and coordinated with the findings of continuous research has been an almost passionate occupation from Thucydides to chroniclers like Bernard DeVoto. The latter's sweeping study of "The Course of Empire" (below) as it changed the American scene from 1492 to 1806 ranks as a major accomplishment among the already established writings of its author. Priscilla Robertson with her panoramic survey of the "Revolutions of 1848" (page 12) provides touches of popularization to the events which shook Europe from stem to stern about one hundred years ago. America's struggle for independence and a new political theory also comes in for a measure of attention by the late Christopher Ward in "The War of the Revolution" (page 13).

Audacity in the Stars

THE COURSE OF EMPIRE. By Bernard DeVoto. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 647 pp. $6.

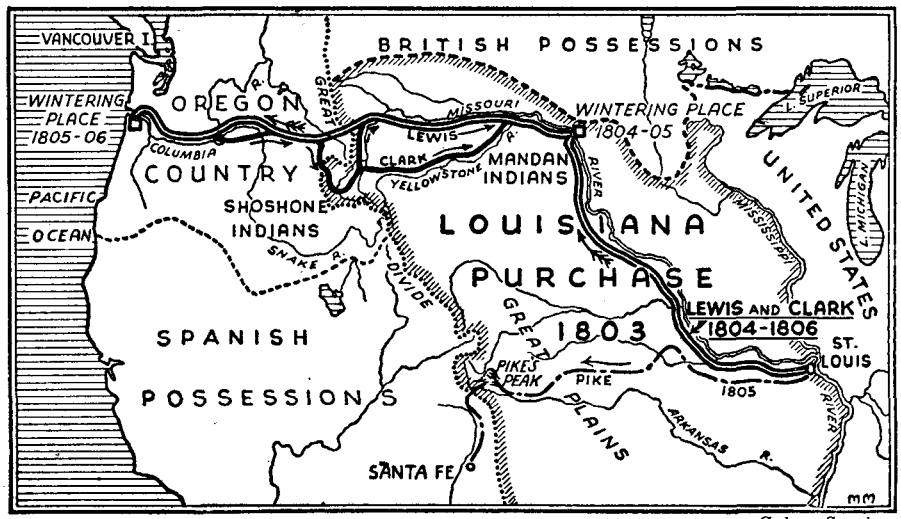
By WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB

TOWARD the end of last December I had occasion to be in the Boston office of Houghton Mifflin when Bernard DeVoto came in with two fat volumes of the manuscript which now appears as "The Course of Empire." Editors worth their salt know that a part of their business is to "gruntle" their authors because there is nothing more disagreeable than a disgruntled author unless it is a disgruntled publisher. At any rate Mr. DeVoto and I were gruntled with a good meal and good conversation, and in the course of it I made tentative inquiry as to what the new book was about. The answer was as tentative as my inquiry, and so I had to wait many months to find out.

A book by Bernard DeVoto has come to be a literary event with historical overtones, as the readers of "The Year of Decision" and "Across the Wide Missouri" know. Between these books he turns out a department in *Harper's* calculated to keep the faith of too-complacent professionals shattered. More than once he has taken a poke at the historians, although he has treated them with more sympathy than he has some others that are in their own opinion more perfect. He hasn't said it, but he would have said it if had he thought about it, that historians are less perfect than some because they publish their mistakes.

"The Course of Empire" will probably rank as DeVoto's major effort in the history field, the culmination of his attempt to tell the story of America. Here he has used the largest canvas and the longest perspective, and what he has come out with is something to make the academic historians, devoted as they are to highly specialized studies, sit up and take note. He has packed into one volume a unified account of the emergence from the mist and fog of the late fifteenth century of the corpus of the United States of America. It is his concentration on the "emergence" that determines his emphasis, makes inevitable the materials he uses as sources, and explains why he began with Columbus in 1492 and ended with Lewis and Clark in the year 1805-06. Columbus began the physical process of dissipating the mist that obscured the continent, and the Lewis and Clark expedition completed it by reaching the Pacific some three centuries later. Both expeditions were interested in the same objective, a short and easy route to the Orient, to a place where a man could dip his hand in a salty wave straight from the China coast.

A great deal of history lies bracketed between 1492 and 1805, and no man can encompass it all. DeVoto does not try, nor is it necessary, because his purpose is to clear the fog that hovered over the geography, to lift it so that the land can be seen in the detail of its mountains and streams. Therefore, DeVoto is always working at the edge of the fog, following the men that pushed it back so that the map makers could do their job. Even that task is prodigious, —one that would make the specialists who are content to follow one explorer quail. They look with awe, and often with some pretense of disdain, on the efforts of Parkman who told the story of France in America, on Prescott who told that of the Spaniards, and on Motley who wrote of the Dutch Republic; and they call them the school of literary historians. They tell their students, thereby taking away their courage, that no man should undertake a big task in history, and unfortunately the students believe them and devote their lives to little things. Not Mr. DeVoto, who is a rebel by nature and who has undertaken here to encompass the work of Parkman, Prescott, and H. H. Bancroft in so far as the work of these men bears on what DeVoto is about. What he is about is following Spaniards, Frenchmen, and with less interest Englishmen, and later with more enthusiasm some Americans, as these ignorant but curious men, often unconscious of what they are doing,



—Culver Service.

The trail of Lewis and Clark.

Walter Prescott Webb, professor of history at the University of Texas, is the author of "Divided We Stand," "The Great Plains," and the forthcoming "The Great Frontier."

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THE AUTHOR: "I distrust these statements," Bernard DeVoto said just before Election Day. "How do I know that your review isn't going to call me a slob and my book an abortion, and how would some nice chatty material about me and it look as a preface? However." He then commented on research for "The Course of Empire"—"My main occupation since 1945 and a part-time job for at least ten years before it"; on John August, his pen name for the slick writing which helps finance the serious—"I expect to bring him back from the pasture when I recover from campaign collapse"; and on the United States—"I think it's likely to survive." DeVoto, described at one time or another in the *Times* or the *Herald Tribune* as "Chief Thunder-on-the-Mountain," "a literary volcano," "a castigator of follies," and "a man who makes his points with both fists and both feet," has been shooting off literary rockets since the early Twenties, after his graduation from Harvard. His latest book is the fifteenth under his own name; a handful of others appeared under August's. DeVoto has written fiction, serials, history, biography, and literary criticism, his chief preoccupations being Mark Twain and the American frontier. Since 1935 he has been writing "The Easy Chair" for *Harper's*; for a couple of years, 1936 to 1938, he edited *The Saturday Review*. Perhaps his overriding interest has been the United States, in all its aspects, and the other day DeVoto had a thought or two on the subject to get off his chest. "The country," he said, "can survive political campaigns, Joe McCarthy, and even writers. Doubtless God would think better of it if we would find the good sense to drown the writers of advertising copy, but in spite of them it remains confident, amused, hard-working, and inexhaustibly interesting. Nobody who gets out into it occasionally has any doubts of or fears for it. In a faint and tentative way writers are beginning, here and there, to learn a little about it; as yet there is no indication that Intellectuals will take such drastic and devastating a step in the forseeable future, knowing they would forfeit their franchise and void their license if they did. But that makes no difference and the United States remains unaware that it is required to abide by the ignorance of the truly thoughtful."

—Bernard Kalb.

go at the task of revealing what hitherto lay under the shroud of the unknown. It is this purpose that gives this book its unity, and explains why every important explorer has a place in it. The title of the second chapter, "The Spectrum of Knowledge," suggests the real theme, and as applied to geography might have been the sub-title of the book.

The book demands intelligent reading, and it is suggested that the readers make constant reference to the main title and to the highly appropriate chapter titles in their relation to the main title. These soundings will help to keep the reader on the course the author is following, the course of empire. DeVoto must know that what he has done will not have the appeal of light summer reading. "Writing history," he says, "is hardly private enterprise; it is public business of the republic of learning and letters. . . . During the past eight years I have often felt that I was no more than a clearing house for the knowledge of others who were writing my book, so often have I appealed to friends and strangers for assistance.

This means that any topic investigated ramifies into strange and unknown fields, and drives the investigator to seek the help of specialists. But the author himself becomes a specialist in what he is doing, and he must realize that he may cause his readers as much trouble as his authors caused him.

The effect is the same as that of going through a great and well-organized museum, whether of art or history. One realizes that the display is magnificent, the arrangement orderly, and the guide more competent than some guides are. At the same time, the wealth is too abundant, the panoramas too spectacular, the side corridors too enticing. The observer knows that behind each display lies a long and interesting story, but neither time nor energy will permit ferreting it out. One must return alone to study and think out for himself the meaning of the parts as well as the whole. My own investigations have made me familiar with many of the characters necessary to DeVoto's story, but many others I have never heard of. To get over all these unknown men—a marvelous display—one must keep in mind that all of them go about the author's task of dissipating the mist so that we can see how the course of empire made its way.

Toil & Trouble

REVOLUTIONS OF 1848: A Social History. By Priscilla Robertson. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 464 pp. $6.

By Arnold Whitridge

THE recent centenary has tempted many historians to examine once more the various revolutions and counter-revolutions that took place in Europe during the year 1848-1849. The layman may wonder why so much effort should be expended on commemorating revolutions that apparently achieved nothing, but Mrs. Robertson finds that "the 1848 period offers a peculiarly interesting opportunity to investigate what happens when people suddenly find their complacencies challenged or their ideals too suddenly fulfilled." The purpose of her book is "to show what it was like to be a worker in Paris, or a student in Vienna, or an Italian patriot, or an aristocrat, or a king in those days." In undertaking to write a social history of the 1848 period Mrs. Robertson set herself an almost impossible task, in which she has succeeded only by breaking the rules of the game. Social history has been defined as history with the politics and the economics left out, but the storm of revolution that broke over Europe in 1848 involved political and economic disturbances that no historian, least of all a serious student of the period like Priscilla Robertson, can possibly ignore.

All over the Continent men were struggling to be free, but there was no agreement as to what freedom meant. In 1848 it was more than ever a chameleon word, changing its color to suit the demands of those that used it. In France "freedom" meant universal suffrage, which in turn implied a republic that guaranteed a living wage to all workers. To the Prussian bourgeois, as Karl Marx said, this boasted freedom meant nothing more than establishing exactly the sort of government that the French had just overthrown. In Bavaria it meant getting rid of a Scotch dancer who called herself Lola Montez and with whom King Ludwig was hopelessly infatuated. Royal mistresses do not necessarily make for revolution, but Lola's demand for the removal of the univer-

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Arnold Whitridge, author and educator, has served with distinction as a Fulbright professor in Greece. Dr. Whitridge's most recent book is "Men in Crisis," a study of the revolutions of 1848.

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sity from Munich was more than even the good-natured Bavarians could tolerate. When finally Ludwig and Donna Maria de los Montes were driven into exile, the church, the army, and the nobility of Bavaria settled back to enjoy their freedom.

But there were other questions besides nationality that were troubling men's minds in this year of revolution. Independent workmen were fighting their long drawn out losing battle against modern industry. It was in 1848 that Karl Marx published his Communist Manifesto exhorting the workers of the world to unite, and that France tried to solve the problem of unemployment by establishing national workshops. Lean harvests in 1846 and 1847, and the potato disease, were causing intense misery in most parts of the Continent. During these years of revolution half a million emigrants from Europe poured into the United States.

A certain positive portion of these newcomers were political refugees, but for the most part they were fleeing from hunger. In a country like Ireland, where the majority of the population lived off potatoes, the failure of the potato crop was a catastrophe to which emigration or death seemed the only answers.

These events and many others Mrs. Robertson sketches in a lively style. Sometimes perhaps she is too anxious to cater to an audience of teen agers. It is a little disturbing in a serious history to be told that the professors of the University of Vienna had been "sweet to the students," when what is meant is that the professors shared the popular enthusiasm for reform. The gorgeous costume worn by Prince Esterhazy becomes in Mrs. Robertson's phrase an "eyestopper." Most disturbing of all is the casual mention of taxicab drivers in the siege of Rome in 1849. Can it be that the author really doubts the ability of her readers to grasp the concept of a horse-drawn vehicle? These are minor blemishes but they might well be corrected in another edition.

With the author's conclusions, and particularly with the statement that the failure of the revolutions was due to the fact that the men who had power never trusted the people, there is bound to be some disagreement. Was not the failure due rather to the fact that the revolutions were urban in character and ideology, and that too often the countryside remained indifferent or hostile? In France, it was Paris that made the February Revolution, but the Presidential election of December disclosed the deep conservatism of the provinces. Mrs. Robertson complains that "Mazzini, Louis Blanc, and Kossuth were all democrats in theory but they became autocratic when it came to putting their plans in action." This is true and it is a familiar complaint, but in any national emergency the man in power is bound to act autocratically.

Mrs. Robertson insists that no new freedom, political, social, or economic, resulted from the revolutions of 1848, and yet after all they were not entirely abortive. For one thing the experiences of 1848 have taught us that universal suffrage is a sterile and a useless thing unless it goes hand in hand with universal education. If the men of 1848 did not win any of their objectives, at least they gained something in self-knowledge. Among other things they learned that liberty is a fruit of slow growth, and that it can ripen only in a stable society.

—Culver Service.

The Chartist demonstration of Kennington Common.

Grand Commencement

THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION. By Christopher Ward. Edited by John Richard Alden. New York: The Macmillan Co. 989 pp. $15.

By George F. Scheer

TEN or fifteen years ago it looked as though the epic story of the American Revolution was doomed to be boxed up in detailed monographs of little interest to the fireside reader. But attention recently has been refocused on the broad dramatic story and especially on the military which came into being as a result of rebellion. The past two years have seen at least three eminently readable, popular books about the war that was fought by Washington's fencibles. To these is now added this handsome, two-volume account by the late Christopher Ward.

To anyone familiar with Mr. Ward's earlier book, "The Delaware Continentals"—the best history of a Revolutionary regiment—it is not surprising that this story of the campaigns of the Continental Army and the men who made them is marked by a sure command of sources, a deep interpretive insight, and flashes of brilliant literary style.

The author makes it perfectly clear in his preface that he has not attempted to write a history of the Revolution. This is a history of the war that was caused by the Revolution and is purely military in scope. "Its aim," writes the author, "is to tell the story of the war on land, the campaigns, battles, sieges, marches, encampments, bivouacs, the strategy and tactics, the hardships, and the endurance of hardship."

This aim is achieved entirely. A few swift colorful pages cover the background for war. A neatly turned chapter called "The Two Armies" tells the non-professional what he needs to know about eighteenth-century soldiers and soldiering. Once thirty-one pages introduce the causes, the men, and the arms, the author plunges into the events of April, 1775.

Seldom has the oft-told tale of Lexington and Concord been related with so much excitement and contemporary feeling. Through the use of many quotations by participants and witnesses a gripping sense of immediacy is created. Similarly for the length of two action-packed volumes the reader is swept along with the ups and downs of the ragged Continentals from Boston to Quebec, New York to Valley Forge, Morristown to Savannah, Charleston to Yorktown. Not all of it is uniformly good, but many of the

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chapters are models of concise, fast-moving, realistic military narrative.

Original manuscript sources were excluded from the author's consideration. Nevertheless, working from standard secondary works and a wealth of printed source material he carefully sifted the work of his predecessors, achieved impressive accuracy, and compiled a very valuable glossary of military terms and a useful bibliography.

All this is not to say that "The War of the Revolution" is without error. Not even the painstaking work of the editor has eliminated a number of minor factual errors which for the professional may tend to mar the shining surface of this excellent book. While the author evaluated his sources wisely, he sometimes failed to go far enough or to go to the ground itself. For example, had he considered all the documents he would not have written that North Carolina seems to have been the first object of the 1780 British expedition against the South. Had he gone to the ground, he would not have written that General Daniel Morgan posted his reserves behind the "rear eminence" at the Cowpens battlefield and later reformed there, for no hill exists on the field and none ever did. This is, however, a common misapprehension; most of the author's sources, even contemporary ones, speak of the eminence or "ridge." Similar errors have been perpetuated by the author elsewhere when following accepted sources. But, they are usually trivial and do not detract from a fine piece of historical reporting.

Mr. Alden has been scrupulous in his editorship, making no major alterations in the author's original manuscript but correcting obvious mistakes he is sure that Mr. Ward himself would have caught in final draft. He has written a modest and becoming introduction and has added an important chapter on the war beyond the Alleghanies written in a style which blends pleasantly with the author's own. Altogether, Mr. Ward's legacy is a rewarding book, entertaining, comprehensive, and sure to win enthusiastic readers.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 973)

RUPERT HART DAVIS:
HUGH WALPOLE

Hugh was fated to endure the prolonged ordeal of the Battle of London in which noise, terror, lack of sleep gradually wore down the strongest physiques. His temperament, always nervous, was subjected to a series of ever-greater shocks.

The Testiness of Prosperity

—From "The Age of Paradox."

"The London Dustman," by Beard.

THE AGE OF PARADOX. By John W. Dodds. New York: Rinehart & Co. 509 pp. $6.

By GEORGE DANGERFIELD

AFTER finishing this account of the English decade 1841-1851, I rather wished that it had been called "The Age of Little Nell," not "The Age of Paradox." It was a period when people were very tearful about fictions, but strangely dry-eyed about realities. That it was more paradoxical than any other decade in the nineteenth century has not been proved by John W. Dodds, and is perhaps not susceptible of proof. The book itself, however, is such a fascinating congregation of facts and pictures that it would be invidious to quarrel with the title.

It is not only a fascinating book, it is also an unnerving one. The England which sprawls across Mr. Dodd's pages was at the mercy of a factory system which had gotten completely out of control. As production increased, so did poverty. In an atmosphere of famine and cholera, despair and displacement, the principle of laissez-faire experienced its heyday and prepared its graveyard.

For those who could afford it, of course, life went on much as usual. They probably did not realize that the times were growing more restless, and they were comfortably unaware of the fact that they were growing more ugly. But so it was. The individualism of the Romantic Movement was being choked to death by the individualism of the Age of Steam. As the railways and bridges leaped across the countryside men told themselves that mind had conquered matter. The result was a blasphemous irreverence for environment. The notion that esthetics—as, for example, town-planning—could play a vital part in the national life would have seemed absurd. Undrained and unventilated, the new industrial towns sprang up, a mere proliferation of pig-sties; and here the "industrious classes" sickened and died. Of all such objects as public buildings, park statues, furniture, and railway stations, it was demanded only that they should be large and showy and that their functions should be immodestly concealed by a mass of rococo decoration.

In effect "The Age of Paradox" is a grand portrait of Philistia before it settled down and grew stuffy. It is a record of such ideas, personalities, and events as "engaged the interest and attention of the ordinary sensual Englishman." This ordinary sensual Englishman, occasionally identified as "Mr. Roe," turns out to be a moderately well-to-do member of the urban middle classes. If the book makes no journey into intellectual England, that is because "Mr. Roe" presumably himself was profoundly unintellectual. His revolutionary cravings (for he was a revolutionary) were amply satisfied by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, and when the Chartists moved on London in '48 he became a special constable. He talked reform, but it was moral reform that chiefly interested him. He had not yet been shaken by Darwin's "Origin of Species" nor consoled by Herbert Spencer's "survival of the fittest." He was not sure that he was fit nor at all convinced that he would survive, haunted as he was by bailiffs and bill-collectors.

Primarily, here is a picture of the Victorian middle classes when they were still untamed; when they still responded to the violence around them with some inner violence of mind; when they had not invented a common drab dress or a common language. Pious, earnest, energetic, individualistic, sentimental, grotesque, insecure—they crowd together on the verges of the mid-nineteenth century, proclaiming their gospel of industrial supremacy and world peace.

A little later, they became the rulers of England.

George Dangerfield is the author of "The Strange Death of Liberal England," "The Bengal Mutiny," and "The Era of Good Feeling."

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Into the Light

THE SHORTER CAMBRIDGE MEDIEVAL HISTORY. Two Volumes. By C. W. Previté-Orton. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1202 *pp.* $12.50.

By A. C. Krey

THE Cambridge History has won for itself the enviable distinction of serving as the standard authoritative reference in its field. Begun somewhat modestly with the Modern History Series, almost exclusively by British scholars for the English public, the whole conception of the work was eventually expanded in the Medieval Series to include other scholars, wherever located. Though World War I prevented the full realization of this program, the aim of the series, now supplemented by the Ancient History and the Economic History in progress, has been achieved. In their entirety the Cambridge Histories have thus established themselves as the most scholarly and comprehensive works of their kind in the world.

In the two volumes here under review, the Syndics of the Cambridge Press have ventured upon an experiment to meet the changing tempo of the age. Was it possible, they asked themselves, to condense the eight bulky volumes of the original Medieval History into a shorter work which could be read not only as a continuously interesting narrative but also as an inclusive and reliable guide to the period? This problem, a large order in anyone's calculation, was put to the late Professor C. W. Previté-Orton, himself one of the principal editors of the original work, who then completed the present manuscript before death overtook him. Philip Grierson, at the request of the Syndics, then saw the volumes through the press, making only such changes as current scholarship seemed to require: and as a further step in the direction of their purpose, the Syndics also asked Dr. S. H. Steinberg to provide appropriate illustrations.

In undertaking to accomplish this ambitious task, these scholars might easily have come forth with either a condensed mass of undigested fact or with too incomplete an account, in an effort to maintain the interest of the general reader. Only rarely, however, does an unillumined list of names and events appear, and the editors, well aware that remote facts do not speak for themselves, have usually tried to supply expert judgment on the meaning of those facts. In addition, though the general arrangement of topics does not slavishly follow the original, almost no important area of interest has been omitted. From Persia to Ireland, from Egypt to Iceland, and from Morocco to the Ural Mountains, with occasional glimpses into inner Asia, no region has been overlooked, and all receive attention over the whole span of time from 305 A.D. to 1492.

Topically, the shorter History somewhat accentuates the characteristics of the original work. Political and ecclesiastical affairs receive preponderant notice. Cultural, economic, and social history, though not altogether

disregarded, are accorded comparatively scant treatment; the relative neglect of these elements constitutes the chief defect of the present work, as it also does of the original.

This deficiency is corrected in part by the illustrations, which form perhaps the most arresting feature of these volumes. The pictures are thoroughly integrated with the text and, to single out but one instance where they add greatly to the material involved, they include a representation of a coin which commemorates the expulsion of the English from France in the year 1453, supplying a concrete symbol to signalize the mystifying close of the Hundred Years War. Many of these illustrations will be new even to seasoned scholars in the field. Furthermore, the curious will be able to decipher with the aid of reading glasses (high powered in the case of the half-page illustration of Magna Carta) nearly all the inscriptions and small details. To achieve so much telling illustration, rather heavy paper has been used, but the satisfied reader will no doubt forget the consequent weight of the volumes in his pleasure at their contents.

The reference value of this shorter history has been likewise enhanced by numerous genealogical tables and lists of emperors and popes, as well as by helpful sketch-maps and a table of dates. One important omission is the absence of bibliographical aids to further reading, contained in the original work. Specialists will hardly be satisfied, as is to be expected, with the summary treatment which many important events have received in these volumes, but even such scholars will find much of value for them also in this shorter version of the Medieval History.

A. C. Krey is chairman of the history department at the University of Minnesota and the author of several studies of the Middle Ages.

Faith Ruptured

THE DEVILS OF LOUDUN. By Aldous Huxley. New York: Harper & Bros. 340 *pp.* $4.

By Anne Fremantle

WHATEVER individual preferences may be, no one can deny that as creator, as critic, and as a contemplative Aldous Huxley is among the most urbanely civilized of writers living. And among the most profoundly concerned with the human condition.

To demonstrate his tightly woven, skilfully documented study of what he calls man's urge to self-transcendence in all its three-dimensional aspects—upward, downward, and horizontal—Mr. Huxley has gone back to France in the seventeenth century in which he set "Grey Eminence," his only biography. In "The Devils of Loudun" he has taken various individuals and has composed a group centered around Urbain Grandier, sometime vicar of Loudun, burnt as a sorcerer, and Soeur Jeanne des Anges, Ursuline prioress, who claimed him as the cause of her possession by seven devils.

Urbain Grandier, a contemporary of Corneille and Descartes and, like them, a pupil of the Jesuits, was appointed at the age of twenty-seven to a Jesuit living, though a secular priest. From the first Grandier made more enemies than friends in the divided city (it was more than half Huguenot). Among his enemies the most disastrously important was the Prior of Coussay, later to be Bishop of Luçon and called Armand-Jean du Plessis de Richelieu, who did not forget to concern himself directly with Grandier's doom.

Other, more local enemies were Madam Trinchant; the public prosecutor; Canon Mignon, Trinchant's nephew; Madam Adam; the apothecary; Pierre Menuau, the King's advocate, whose intended bride was another of Grandier's mistresses; and De la Rochepozay, his bishop. Grandier's few local friends were entirely convinced of his innocence, as was Jean D'Armagnac, Governor of Loudun. The Jesuits did their best to befriend their erstwhile pupil, and the people of Loudun, who, like Grandier were against Richelieu, admired their pastor's superb eloquence.

Wining and wenching, Grandier soon antagonised Capuchins and Carmelites and united the clergy and bougeoisie solidly against him. His enemies found their weapon in Soeur Jeanne des Anges. Only twenty-five,

(*Continued on page* 45)

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Fiction. From the battlefields of ancient Troy to those of America's Yorktown there has been a long historical haul as well as a considerable development in the art of fiction. If that lyre-swinging minstrel Homer were alive today he might have enjoyed commenting on this week's list of books. Quite possibly he would have appreciated Burke Davis's "Yorktown" (below) as the work of a fellow practitioner in the realm of re-creating historical material; in this case a brisk, colorful account of the last hectic year of the American Revolution. Homer might have been puzzled as to why an audience would be interested in the struggles of a schizophrenic individual who tries to dominate his split self; yet well-written novels like Margaret Kennedy's "Troy Chimneys" (page 17) do have a considerable following. That the extra-marital divaganzas of a psychology professor pictured in Robie Macauley's "The Disguises of Love" (page 17) should merit attention would be beyond a Greek bard who was concerned with the big-time operations of supermen who, if schizophrenic, were in any case wondrous.

Climax of Our Theory

YORKTOWN. By Burke Davis. New York: Rinehart & Co. 306 *pp.* $3.50.

By Willard M. Wallace

THE author of that excellent novel "The Ragged Ones" has written another spirited book, "Yorktown." A tale of the last year of fighting in the Revolution, it is concerned with the campaign that terminated in the capitulation of Cornwallis. But until that day arrives when the redcoats march out in all their splendor and misery to surrender, the reader moves from the grim prison ship *Jersey* to the mutiny of the Pennsylvania Line, thence through war-prosperous Philadelphia to the tattered Virginia army of Lafayette, who trades bloody blows with his lordship, and finally to York peninsula. Battle scenes crackle with action, and the sights, smells, and sounds of conflict are presented in a realistic manner which, fortunately, stops this side of being macabre. The writing throughout is crisp, vibrant, and colorful.

The structure of the novel leaves something to be desired. There is the love story of Sergeant Peter Spargo and the uninhibited young Eve Cooper. Burke Davis gives also the story of the trials of Mad Anthony Wayne in contending with the mutineers of the Pennsylvania Line and in eventually leading a new Line to cooperate with Lafayette against Cornwallis. Finally we learn of the efforts of Washington and Rochambeau to secure effective collaboration. Though Spargo in his love for Eve, his devotion to Wayne, and his respect for Washington is a useful device for holding all parts together, the strain on the reader's credulity is occasionally acute. Furthermore, the point of view changes so often from one character to another as to be disconcerting. Only if one accepts the campaign itself as the real hero does this constant shifting make sense.

The characterization is more successful. Generally it is sharp and convincing, particularly of Wayne and Lafayette among the historical figures and of the never-say-die Captain Chalk and the mysterious agent Raffine among the minor characters. Spargo's blind devotion to Wayne, however, impressed this reader as being about as naive and incredible as his companions evidently considered it, and out of joint with the relative maturity of his character as initially depicted.

Notwithstanding the creaks and strains, the book holds one's interest. Mr. Davis knows his Revolution and writes with fervor. Revealing a keen understanding of the financial, social, and military issues involved, he describes the mutiny with an admirable blend of fact and fiction. He paints a vivid picture of Philadelphia with its busy Congressmen, merchants rich and scheming, witty society women, frail sisters of less estate, privateersmen, stout farmers in for market, taverns bursting at their seams with turbulent patrons and a plenitude of food and rum. Thanks to Mr. Davis's skill, the French expeditionary force comes alive, not only in the magnificence of its uniforms and equipment, but also in the hearty human qualities of its rank and file, the dash and brilliance of its aristocratic officers, and particularly in the common sense and magnanimity of Rochambeau. Mr. Davis has caught the flavor of the period and has written a novel which, if not remarkable, is decidedly entertaining.

—Jacket design by Edwin Schmidt for "Yorktown."

Williard M. Wallace, professor of history at Wesleyan University, Connecticut, is the author of "Appeal to Arms: A Military History of the American Revolution."

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Inner vs. Outer

TROY CHIMNEYS. By Margaret Kennedy. New York: Rinehart & Co. 249 pp. $3.

By Sara Henderson Hay

"I HAVE known you both for eleven years," said Miss Caroline Audley to Miles Lufton, M.P., holder of an important post in the Exchequer, professionally charming gentleman-about-town, "I mean the *private* Mr. Lufton and the *political* Mr. Lufton. There is some such distinction, I imagine, in anyone who must sustain a public character."

"And are they really so distinct? Can you always tell them apart?"

"I think so. The private Mr. Lufton likes solitude and hates the world. The political Mr. Lufton never forgets his duty, and will pay compliments before breakfast."

Miles Lufton found this conversation disturbing; he had not realized that the duality of his nature was apparent to anyone but himself. Of the two personalities, always opposed within himself, he himself was well aware—his heart and his mind were the battleground of Miles Lufton, the ineffectual idealist, the gentle solitary, and Miles Lufton, nicknamed "Pronto," the hard, ambitious, ruthless opportunist, the cultivator of advantageous friendships, the charming and ingratiating visitor at great houses, the man not above toadying to the dissolute and corrupt, provided they might further his career.

The background of Margaret Kennedy's novel is the early nineteenth century, in an England stirred by the ferment of the Industrial Revolution, but her portrait of a man who was two men transcends a period, and is a poignant, revealing, deeply perceptive psychological study. It is historical fiction only in the circumstances and environment of its characters, and in the vivid and graphic descriptions of the Regency with its extremes of luxury and squalor; Miles "Pronto" Lufton himself, with his conflicts and his triumphs and defeats, is a contemporary in any period.

The book is in the form of a few letters and a personal memoir, written by Lufton in 1818, his thirty-sixth year, shortly before his sudden death, and covering the time roughly between 1808 and 1818. This material was purportedly found, some sixty years later, in the library of descendants of the Chadwick-Lufton families, and was read by interested parties, mostly for information concerning one Ludovic, mentioned in "the Lufton Papers" as they were called. Correspondence between members of the families involved, in a Prologue, Interlude, and Epilogue, dated 1880, imply that the papers will be destroyed—too many skeletons were disclosed, *en passant*, in this exposure and violation of a man's confession to himself.

It is an extremely intricate and subtle technique, this telling of a story in flashback form, in a first person narrative, and Miss Kennedy handles it, as might have been expected, in a brilliant and expert manner. The tragedy of a man who was not so much in search of his identity as he was a man trying to disengage the two conflicting personalities which he recognized more and more plainly in himself, is a moving and engrossing story. It was Miles who was revolted by the social injustices of his day; it was "Pronto" who, in the interests of privilege, said nothing could be done about it. It was Miles who would have given himself to save a humble friend; but "Pronto" who found himself ill-equipped for the sacrifice. It was Miles who loved, and discovered himself speaking with the practised suavities of "Pronto." And Fate dealt the final irony. Miles never retired to Troy Chimneys, the lovely, secluded country house at the crossing of "trois chemins" which "Pronto's" money had bought—a scandalous duel wrote "finis" to the final resolving of the lifelong conflict.

Margaret Kennedy's latest novel is a worthy successor to her previous works. That wide audience which she so firmly established with "The Constant Nymph," "Lucy Carmichael," and others, will recognize her afresh as one of the most distinguished and delightful of contemporary writers.

Margaret Kennedy and Robie Macauley—"intricate and subtle technique."

The Secret Feud

THE DISGUISES OF LOVE. By Robie Macauley. New York: Random House. 282 pp. $3.

By Frederick J. Hoffman

THE love that is disguised in this novel is that of a professor of psychology at "Creston U." for a student who has walked into one of his classes one day and outlandishly upset the polite monotony of classroom life. It is a secret affair, conducted with all of the usual amateurish strategems of concealment (the weekend trip to a lake-resort, the absences from home "because he is writing a book," the separate apartment in another end of town) from the professor's more than ordinarily stupid wife. But the disguises do not work forever; the affair is discovered; it is made a part of gossip and thus becomes a community affair in which the insulted wife is supported and guided by several of her friends in the faculty wives' club.

Such a summary as this represents it as a very ordinary novel, which it decidedly is not. For Robie Macauley has made of superficial and commonplace matters a novel of a peculiarly fine and absorbing texture. The "disguises" are not, except superficially, those used to conceal a rather tawdry relationship, but rather the natural, exasperating failures of communication among a family group. They are barriers to understanding which are erected primarily because of basic egoisms that almost entirely shut one person off from another.

The young son, Gordon Graeme, who has been treated at times as a superior person and tested and re-

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tested for his Binet quotient, at other times dismissed as of "no credit to the family," views the affairs of his parents contemptuously, incredulously, and erroneously; he never really grasps the point of his father's affair, thinks it is his mother who is being adulterous, and lives in his own world, planning constantly to irritate and confuse his parents. Helen Graeme is so thoroughly portrayed as the "wholesome," orderly, and empty-headed wife that she comes closest of the three to stereotype. She is a model of domestic order, a housewife of impeccable manner, a cheerful, considerate soul, who years before has decided what her husband was, and is therefore quite unwary when the affair starts.

When at last she is informed of it, since she has no feminine shrewdness other than that borrowed from women's magazines, she has to learn strategy from her friends. In the end, she proves to be the most pathetic victim of the novelist's survey of disguises; hers is a natural disguise, a protection through complacent naivete against feeling deeply or acting wisely in her own interests.

Mr. Macauley, whose critical work on the fiction of Ford Madox Ford has served him well, has worked very commonplace materials into an extremely good novel through the exercise of an interplay of points of view, primarily those of the three members of the family. Space does not permit a proper explanation of the intricate pattern the novelist has developed of these three persons viewing the "object" of the novel, portraying it and themselves, revealing themselves almost unwittingly in a harsh, cold self-light, which is both illuminating and, in a subtle sense, terrifying. One has the experience of examining the gradual development of tensions, the breakdown of restraints, the collapse of self-sufficiencies—until hysteria threatens in the final scene. While the novel might as properly have been called "The Masks of Self-Love," it is especially brilliant in its revelation of the pathos that informs the ordinary, tedious, and quiet desperation of "respectable" lives suddenly threatened by passion and its accumulating disorders.

Twin-Tongued Erin

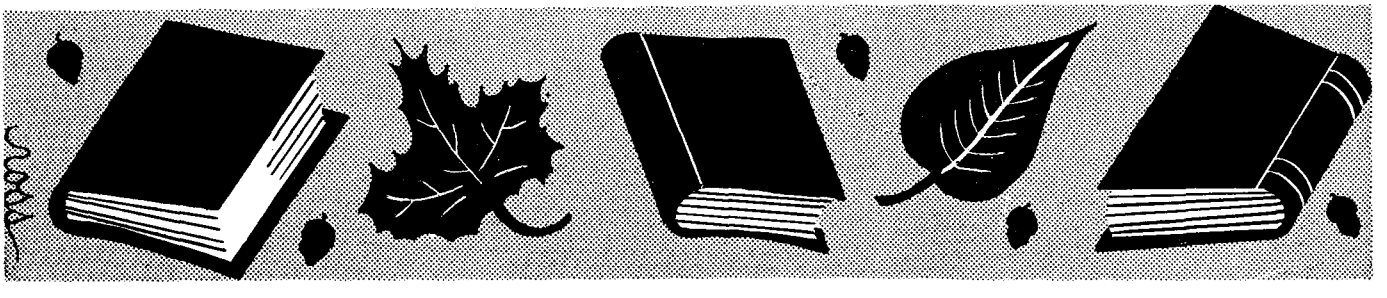
A TIME OUTWORN. By Val Mulkerns. New York: Devin-Adair Co. 253 pp. $3.

By Mary M. Colum

TO ONE who, like myself, is somewhat allergic to Irish novels—so many of them seem as if they were written by the same person and about the same countryside—Val Mulkerns's "A Time Outworn" comes as a surprise and as a refreshment. It is a young, lyrical book by a writer who is about the same age as was Emily Bronte when she wrote "Wuthering Heights." One doesn't have to say that it has not the power or the passion of Emily Bronte nor is the lyricism which induces the comparison so intense. Written in the first person, the heroine describes herself as "impressionable and superficial," with only two things leaving an enduring impression on her—her father's romantic patriotism and her own love affair. The striking thing is that Val Mulkerns has contrived to make this type of character interesting and memorable. Her impressionability is a kind of mirror that reflects poetry into the story.

As to the story itself, it is wholly lovely and original, built around the simple, ordinary things that might happen to young students in the Dublin of today: going to dances in their best evening clothes, falling in love with fellow students, reading Joyce and Yeats in places where Yeats and Joyce lived and worked, vacationing in the Arran Islands, losing a fiance to a bawdy young female who knew how to turn on the sex appeal. Then, for this reviewer, there is the interest of having been at the same school in a Georgian street where the old parlor with the Rafael reproductions had seen generations of school girls summoned for admonitions; though there is all this unchanged, Val Mulkerns has written about an intrinsically different life in an almost totally different country which yet remains the same under a different aspect. The heroine does many of the same things as were done in my generation—she goes to the Abbey Theatre to hear a Yeats verse play, the early Yeats verse that so belongs to its time, place, and aspirations that one wonders how anyone outside Dublin can understand it. She sees an old tired woman being helped into the theatre. My generation saw that same woman in her radiant beauty entering with Yeats; it was Maud Gonne, and the play was "Countess Cathleen" which the poet had written for her. The play is made to seem part of the love affair between the heroine of "A Time Outworn" and the young student named Diarmuid who had read Yeats and Joyce with her. This Diarmuid is connected in the minds of the girl students with Diarmuid of the old epic tales they had read in school—Diarmuid of the Love Spot, of the Sun Face, Diarmuid son of Dheena. It is only in a little country with a long history that one generation can be shown as coming out of another generation, and all related to the historic and literary past of the country.

"A Time Outworn" is by a new type of Irish writer, bilingual, brought up on the revived Irish language and literature. All the Irish writers we hear of were born and mostly brought up under a British flag. The system of education was British, discountenancing everything native and traditional. This writer never saw a Lord Lieutenant's cavalcade or that solitary mounted soldier with a drawn sword fixed on a rifle who rode through the streets of Dublin, symbol perhaps of an occupying army. She grows up in a country where a native tradition has asserted itself. When she reads Shakespeare it seems to be as foreign to her as the Odes of Horace or the Aeneid. Still, the author has missed the great shaping figures who flung the glamour of their imaginations and their personalities into the life of my generation—they are to Val Mulkerns the names of people out of a history book—the names of men who dreamed their way into a rousing literature and their country into freedom.



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Fritz Peters—"shocking experience."

Glad of the End

THE DESCENT. By Fritz Peters. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 249 pp. $3.

By HARRISON SMITH

FROM the hundreds of thousands of human beings who daily speed over our highways, thirteen men and women and two children are selected by Fritz Peters for a rendezvous with fate on a certain steep New Mexico hill on a stormy winter's night. Lest there be any doubt of the purpose of "The Descent," Mr. Peters begins with an ominous quotation from John Donne: "All our life is but a going out to the place of Execution, to death. . . . What man is he that liveth that shall not see death?"

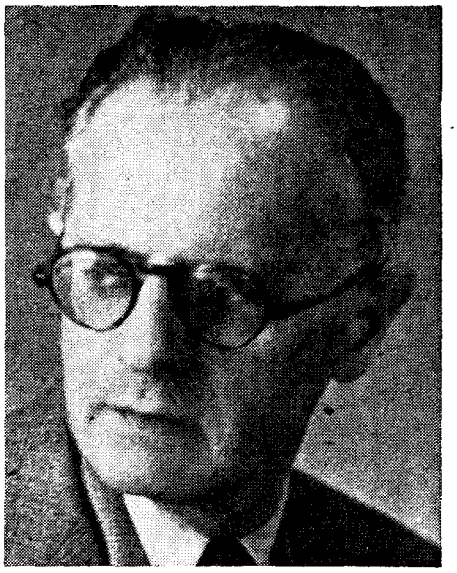
The moment that awaits the victims evolves apparently from the pattern of their lives. They are driven by the author, who is their Nemesis and who in a sense plays God to them, toward the place of execution or the shock that may bring them salvation or a gleam of hope for the future. These variously assorted people, completely unknown to one another, are clearly defined in a series of brief introductions.

Peter Wells, a lonely and disconsolate playwright, leaves his father dying of inanition in an Eastern village and heads for Hollywood in his fast car. Steven Williams has given up his job in New York. "Imprisoned in his own integrity" he can no longer endure his wife's unhappiness or the disorder in which she lives. Henry Franklin starts out on a winter vacation with his nagging wife in their Cadillac, with their luggage and a medicine-kit filled with soporifics and cure-alls. The verdict of a Western garage attendant is that Henry likes to be bossed by that old hag. Young Caroline Pratt, an oversexed rich girl, picks up an aimless but inexhaustibly virile veteran in the fast car, with a bed in the back, which her parents had thoughtfully given her. Richard Simms, New Mexican artist, dislikes his wealthy wife, a dealer in real-estate. He is also headed toward the fatal hill. The Humes, with their two children are touring from one national monument to another in their station wagon, wondering why they are going anywhere. Then there is Jim Curran, with his inhuman face, a sadist and a murderer who is to die, after the police have found the mutilated body of a prostitute in the back of his burning car.

The common denominator in this collection of distraught, miserable men and women is that they are all Americans who are dissatisfied with their lives. But the frightful accident on the steep descent is not without its rewards. To Henry Franklin it offers what he had longed for, death, oblivion, and escape from the deadly routine of his existence with his wife. Richard Simms discovers that he can endure his wife and that his art is a reason for existence. Dorothy Simms, lying on what should have been her deathbed, obeys her husband's command to live. Peter Wells can attend his father's funeral and start contentedly for Hollywood. Jim Curran is able to enjoy the pain he has made others suffer and his confession at the point of death.

It must be admitted that "The Descent" is a shocking experience for the reader, who has to follow the engines of destruction carrying Fritz Peters's characters on the highways to destruction. His terse and often bitter capsule analyses of their natures and their past are not entirely satisfying. Is it possible to sum up the souls of human beings in a few hundred words without leaving doubts in the reader's mind that however unhappy they seem to be they may have their days or hours of satisfaction, of affection, or even of love? If all of us, as Mr. Peters is saying, are inexorably following a pattern of life which leads us to a crucial moment in time, then we are victims of the grim philosophy of predestination.

It is obvious that all of his characters who meet on the deadly hill would have been spared their wounds, or their death, if they had stopped somewhere on the road for a cup of coffee. But aside from these reflections, this is a disturbing and frightening novel. It may, at least, persuade its readers not to drive "two tons of glass and steel" at seventy miles an hour.



Maurice Samuel—"acute distress."

Whoops! A Ton

THE DEVIL THAT FAILED. By Maurice Samuel. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 271 pp. $3.

By CHARLES LEE

IF you are looking for non-Martian novelties in your reading, look no farther than this unusual and absorbing book. Maurice Samuel's story will tickle the imagination and tease the mind. It is a refreshingly intellectual tale of adventure almost all of whose curious action takes place in one room.

Alan Cleaver, thirty-one, married, father of one child, a philologist by training, an English teacher by vocation, wakes up in a darkened room, feeling ill and knowing he is in a strange place. He quickly discovers two remarkable things about himself, namely that he is naked and that he is tied down. All he can recall is that he had been walking along the river road near the campus when he had suddenly blacked out. Had he been kidnapped? Had he been taken ill? His mind rushes about in panic, he begins to shout, he remains alone, he all but seeks flight in hysteria.

And then he thinks he has become a victim of some wild hallucination, for the door opens to admit Dr. Ferencz Sertorus, an impressive and imperious man whose barking voice makes simple declarative sentences "sound like a decree" and who for all his personal formidableness appears to be no larger than a midget. Dr. Sertorus's assistants, of whom there are five, also startle Alan by reason of their diminutiveness. But real panic doesn't begin to engulf him until Dr. Sertorus, formal in his talk as he is in his pinstriped trousers, confronts

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him with the terrifying facts of his situation.

He is told that he has been in a more or less constant delirious state of convulsions and rage for some eleven weeks, that he has been strapped down for his own protection, that he is in a private sanatorium by agreement with his family, that his room is specially oxygenized, that contrary to his understandable but erroneous suspicions his doctor and staff are not midgets but normal-sized people, and that he, Alan, has suffered a lamentable disorganization of dimensionality owing to the stupefying fact that he has become a victim of "delayed giantism" and is, in truth, now nearly fourteen feet tall and twenty-two hundred pounds on the scale.

How Alan begins to make his clumsy and pathetic adjustments to a life of seven foot strides and breakfasts consisting of two dozen eggs, a gallon of coffee, and a pound and a half of bread makes for a kind of macabre humor. Additional distress awaits him at the hands of his nurses, one of whom wishes to exercise her maternal instincts upon his huge frame while the other has determinedly instinctive notions of another sort. He has also to endure the sexual brag of Dr. Bethlen.

Alan in relationship to Sertorus, the satanic spellbinder in quest of the allergy trigger that precipitated the disaster, provides the reader with a dexterous and delightful variation on the old theme of Gulliver. But there is much more than cleverness here. There is weight.

FRASER YOUNG LITERARY CRYPT No. 492

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 492 will be found in the next issue.

AND SKIING EKLY K

THIPEHFF MN THGC K RKHW

NO QYFFNTB.—M. CYWQYWG

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 491

To do as you would be done by, is the plain, sure and undisputed rule of morality and justice.
—LORD CHESTERFIELD.

The Machined Ulysses

RETURN TO ITHACA. By Eyvind Johnson. New York: Thames & Hudson. 474 pp. $4.00.

By BASIL DAVENPORT

THE GREEKS were interested in universals; when they made a statue they tried to convey man as he is in eternity, with a beauty of body such as has not been seen since Paradise and a serenity of face such as will not be seen till Heaven. Today we are interested in man in time, with the warts and the lines of passion and suffering. Eyvind Johnson has boldly and successfully rewritten the Odyssey as a modern novel where the interest is far less in what Odysseus does than in what he *thinks*, in what happens to him than in what happens *in* him.

Johnson's Odysseus is a middle-aged, tired man. He is tormented with doubts: what will it be like to meet a wife and son whom he has not seen for twenty years? Does he really want to leave the island where he has lived for seven years with Calypso? And he is tortured with guilt; guilt over the murder of Hector's little son Astyanax, about the whole Trojan War of aggression and extermination. And he knows that when he gets home—if he gets home—the whole bloody business of fighting will start again. Penelope and Telemachus have their human problems, and the suitors have their politics; they represent the Progressive Party, whose program for Ithaca is to do away with the popular assembly. It is characteristic of Mr. Johnson's approach that he gives as much space to Penelope and Telemachus as to Odysseus and that Odysseus's narrative of his adventures at the court of Alcinoüs bulks much less large than in Homer. There Odysseus was singing for his supper and for a ship to get home in. It would have been no use to say that they were caught in a volcanic eruption and temporarily sealed in a cave; Odysseus's story of a one-eyed giant named Polyphemus was more entertaining. And yet the supernatural is not entirely absent. Hermes appears in the opening episode as undivine a god as Odysseus is an unheroic hero, but he appears. This is not merely a euhemerist version of the Odyssey; it is an entire reconception and reanalysis of it in modern terms.

The better one knows the Odyssey, the better probably one will enjoy it. One may question some of Eyvind Johnson's alterations and wonder why he has played up the old nurse Eurycleia almost at the expense of playing Penelope down; one may feel that in his complete muting of the old hound Argus, he is carrying unemotionalism to an extreme; and one may have a few private carpings. Though Mr. Johnson's preoccupations occasionally grow wearisome, he has effected a transmutation of the Odyssey in terms of a technical achievement of sheer bravura. And it is more than that; it is a genuine novel, sometimes cynical, sometimes ironical and almost tender—how often does Odysseus assure himself that in a thousand years men will have solved this problem of war!

—Jacket design for "Return to Ithaca."

And yet, perhaps unfairly, one is reminded of Bernard Shaw's review of a book by Arnold Bennett in which Bennett said, "One reason why a play is easier to write than a novel is that it is shorter." This inspired Shaw to rewrite the duel between Macbeth and Macduff as seven pages of narrative, mostly *monologue interieur:* "It seemed all so useless. You strove and strove, and killed and killed, and made journeys to consult witches; and at the end of it all the wood pigeon had no more to say to you than before, and the sky was no bluer, the cloud no whiter, the whims no yellower," and so on. "Return to Ithaca" is a book to read—and then reread the Odyssey, where Odysseus is not one more self-doubting modern intellectual, but the wiliest of men, as Achilles was the swiftest, and Hector the noblest, and Priam the most unhappy.

Fiction Notes

FOR WOMEN ONLY: For Sally Bradford Cutter, Nemesis wore mink, colors that were too bright, was overweight, and too, too chatty. Her name in private life was May Johnson, and she had just moved back to Sally's Middle-

(*Continued on page* 43)

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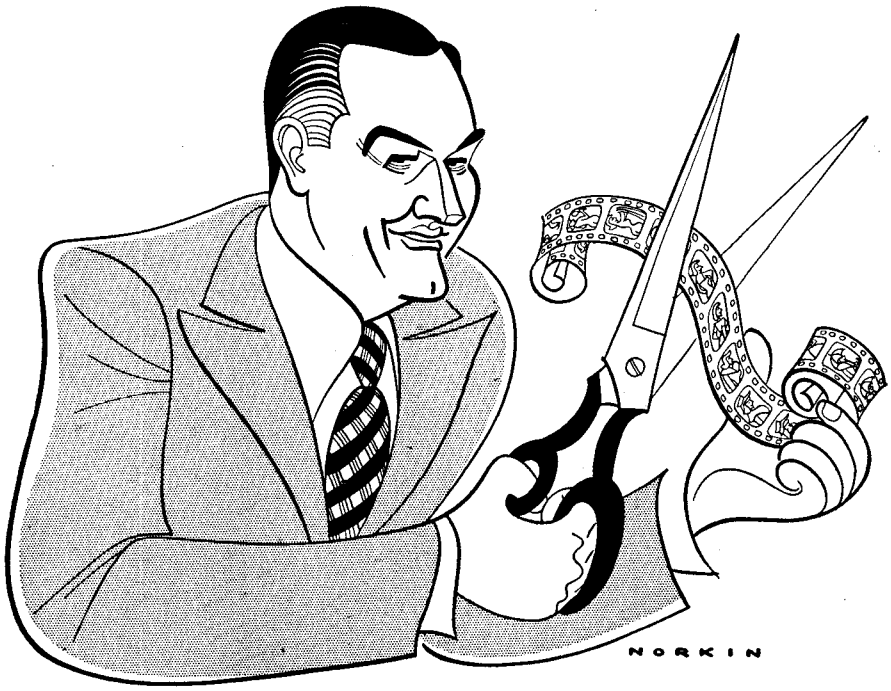

Dr. Hugh M. Flick: "The public is entitled to protection."

Talk with a Movie Censor

HOLLIS ALPERT

THE LOT of the movie censor, I have discovered from a talk with New York State's official film censor, Dr. Hugh M. Flick, is neither a simple nor a particularly pleasant one. Official censors are exposed to the *total* film production of this country and all the foreign films entering through the U. S. Customs. These include movies in Spanish, Chinese, Arabian, and Yiddish, as well as French, Italian, and Irish so filled with Gaelic speech that a translated script is required. Like or dislike, enjoyment or boredom, truth or falsehood, are not the issues for the zealous censor; it is his appointed function to decide the more complex one of whether or not a given film meets the requirements of a particular state or local law. Actually, censorship boards in this country exert something known by the term of "pre-censorship." Bannings, with certain exceptions, occur *before* a film is exposed to public view.

Although the pre-censoring of movies has been claimed to be illegal, both official and unofficial groups have engaged in the practice for something like thirty-five years. Eight states and more than one hundred localities have film censorship laws on their books. The reason for their continued and practically unhampered operation is directly traceable to a 1915 decision by the United States Supreme Court, a decision that said, in effect, that movies could not be considered "speech" and thus come under constitutional guarantees of freedom; they were mere entertainment. Times have changed, of course, but it was only a few months ago that any appreciable dent was made in this official American concept of the motion-picture form. The Supreme Court decision on the case of "The Miracle," a short Italian film banned by the Board of Regents of New York State, held that motion pictures came under the guarantees of the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, and that no censorship board could ban a movie on the presumed ground that it contained sacrilegious content. The whole question of pre-censorship, however, was not clarified by the court. Censorship boards are still free to operate, and none has gone out of business because of the Supreme Court ruling.

Overcome not so much by sympathy for the censor's profession as by a desire for edification and an expression of its point of view, it recently occurred to me to find a censor and talk to him. Dr. Hugh M. Flick for the past four years has held the permanent directorship of New York State's Motion Picture Division. This body examines and licenses, at three dollars per ten minutes of running time, all movies offered for exhibition to the general public within the state. Since some fifteen hundred movies a year obtain the New York State license, the department can point to the fact that it uses up not a single penny of the taxpayer's money and actually contributes something like half a million dollars a year to the state treasury. Multiply this sum by the fees charged by other official licensing boards and it can be seen that Hollywood is taxed in the millions each year for the privilege of having its products examined prior to exhibition. Since Hollywood supports its own private censorship body, and movies made by its major companies are almost never banned or even truncated to any great extent, its contribution to the public treasury must be considered a noteworthy and generous one.

Two of the most recent film censorship cases have been those of "The Miracle" and a prize-winning French movie, "La Ronde." Both of these were banned in New York State. While the case of "The Miracle" has been won, the court fight on behalf of "La Ronde" is continuing, after a motion to revoke the ban was defeated by a lower court of New York State. Meanwhile "La Ronde" can be seen by any New Yorker who wishes to journey to nearby Connecticut. The influence of New York's Motion Picture Division, nevertheless, has a way of extending beyond the boundaries of the state; other state and local censorship bodies are certain to examine with increased stringency any movie censored in New York. At the same time, according to exhibitors of foreign films, New York is one of the more lenient of the six states that actively examine movies before their exhibition. Virginia and Maryland are reputed to be the "easiest," Pennsylvania and Ohio the harshest. One Ohio censor in particular is noted for arbitrary judgments. When Paramount asked the reason for a cut in "The Lost Weekend"—a hospital attendant's remark about an alcoholic patient, "Prohibition caused that"—this censor said, "Paramount has no right to an opinion on that subject."

DR. FLICK, when I telephoned him, readily consented to an appointment. I reached his offices at 80 Centre Street in Manhattan around lunchtime and he made the suggestion that we might as well have our conversation over some food. Centre Street is close to

(*Continued on page* 50)

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The Saturday Review

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Tales of Two Citizens

FOUR days before the election we discussed the campaign with the man who runs the tailor shop down the street. He was closing his shop early, he said, so he could do some heavy volunteer work that evening for Stevenson.

"Most important thing I've ever done in my life," he said. "Can't remember voting for a better man. Only one smart enough to keep us out of war and save our freedoms. Don't elect him, we're lost. Once liked Ike but I see no hope now if he gets in."

At lunch the next day I listened to my waiter as he sized up the campaign.

"I don't want to sound like a crazy man," he remarked, "but I'm going to quit this job and go to Mexico if Ike doesn't get in. Way the country's been going these last few years all our money will be in the hands of crooked politicians and all our men fighting a war somewhere in Asia. Stevenson's the prisoner of the Pendergast gang. I never gave any of my hard-earned money for campaign contributions before but I'm doing it now and my wife agrees with me completely."

Two days after the election we picked up our suit at the tailor's. Our friend was whistling as he worked. We asked him the inevitable question.

"Well, maybe the way it turned out it's not so bad after all," he said with a smile. "You've got to admit that General Eisenhower is a great man. He'll do a good job. By God, he *has* to do a good job. Sent him a telegram congratulating him. Maybe now I can catch up on my work."

We saw our waiter at noon. He didn't seem to be exulting over the fact that he wouldn't have to exile himself to Mexico.

"Sure, I feel good about the election," he said. "But, you know, I feel sorry we couldn't have elected Stevenson Vice President or something. Now there's a real man for you. He appeals to the best in people. I sure hope Eisenhower gives him a big job. I'd hate to think the country isn't using a fellow with his brains and sense."

* * *

Now, the remarkable thing about these two incidents is that there was nothing remarkable about them. All over the country millions of people were turning the same wonderful somersaults and landing on their feet. The magic stabilizer was the ballot box. It contained something more than marked slips of paper. Built into it was the absolute confidence of the people. Whatever the devices that may have been used to capture the votes, the device that counted the votes was what really mattered. It was the magic conciliator. Not that there was anything insincere or tentative about the strong partisan positions people took before the election. When people spoke about their candidates in terms of life or death for the country, they were expressing their genuine feelings rather than parroting political slogans. But they were reacting within a framework of competition and uncertainty; the moment the framework changed they could with equal sincerity shift their thinking to the higher level of common ground and a larger unity.

DeTocqueville refers to the "electioneering intrigues, the meanness of candidates, and the calumnies of their opponents." These evils, he remarked, were doubtless great, "but they are transient, whereas the benefits that attend them remain. The desire of being elected may lead some men for a time to violent hostility; but this same desire leads all men in the long run to support each other; and if it happens that an election accidentally severs two friends, the electoral system brings a multitude of citizens permanently together who would otherwise always have remained unknown to one another. Freedom produces private animosities but despotism gives birth to indifference."

AND James Bryce, another distinguished outsider, was moved to express wonder at the fact that the ease with which the Americans slid into blazing political warfare was exceeded only by the ease with which they slid out again.

Nothing is more unique in the American democracy than this wide-open arena for periodic upheaval resulting in unity without uniformity. There is a series of tests, each one more important than the last, all leading up to the big test and the big prize. The battle for local political control becomes subordinated to the regional battles, and that in turn to the nominating conventions, and that in turn to the election. Each battle has its own surrounding ring, requiring unity for the larger battle. The main challenge today, of course, is to recognize the need to construct an ultimate outer ring for the differences within the world itself. One of the most eloquent definitions of the mission and obligation of America in this respect is to be found in the closing pages of a book published several years ago—"Crusade in Europe," by Dwight David Eisenhower. The burden of that conclusion was the need for and possibility of world law in our time.

—N. C.

The Beach

By Eric Barker

BY the sea's edge, under the bronze-handed sun,
the beach receives the refuse of the tides.
Wrung through with funeral hymns, the derelict dead—
perches of gulls and scuttling-floors of crabs—
forget their long sea-windings, cast out
from undulant voyagings far and wide—
travelers horizonless that swam the utmost hill
and trench of ocean to this final shore,
their songs all sung save what the tides
keep in their moonward driftings or release
faint and reminiscent through the ears of shells.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Santayana & John Hersey

▶ In Paul Arthur Schilpp's article on Santayana ["The Roman Brahmin," *SR* Nov. 1] he reports that the aging philosopher had told of reading John Hersey's "Hiroshima." This was of particular interest to me, for it echoed something that Santayana told me when I visited him in the summer of 1944 while stationed in Rome.

Santayana shied away from any penetrating or lengthy discussions; perhaps this attitude resulted from previous upsetting involvements. But I do remember vividly his answer to one of my questions: "Whom do you consider the most outstanding living American fiction writer?" He replied, in his slow delivery but with little hesitation: "John Hersey." And this is the Hersey of August 1944, the author of "A Bell for Adano," who had not yet conceived "Hiroshima" or "The Wall."

Alfred Feuer.

New York, N. Y.

"Limelight"

▶ It is interesting to read Messrs. Knight and Alpert, pro and con, on "Limelight" [*SR* Oct. 25].

I find myself agreeing mainly with Mr. Alpert. Neither critic, however, mentioned the single really honest and telling performance in the film, which is the work of Sydney Chaplin. In one of the most tritely written roles of recent years, young Mr. Chaplin brings the part dignity, charm, and credibility. The Dickensian landlady should also be cited for her cameo contribution.

Your critics have overlooked the generally poor photography in "Limelight," the bad lighting, the trembling walls of interior sets, and the remarkably inferior "process" shots. For a genius who has millions to spend and time to burn, Mr. Chaplin in "Limelight" makes us appreciate all the more those filmmakers who must bring a picture in on schedule, and who still manage to endow their productions with elements that lift them above the banal and lachrymose.

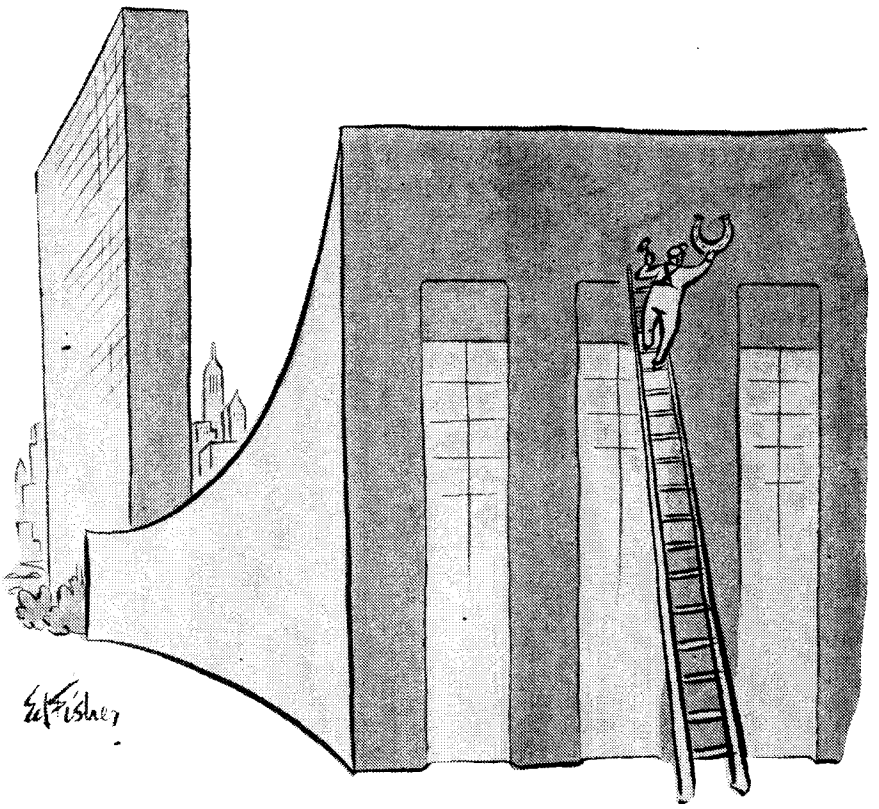
Robert Downing.

New York, N. Y.

McCarthy

▶ In view of the fact that you say you try to provide impartial reviews, just why, may I ask, did you turn over "McCarthy: The Man, the Senator, the Ism" to William T. Evjue [*SR* Oct. 25]? Surely it cannot be unknown to you that for years Mr. Evjue has devoted the pages of his *Madison Capital Times* to attacks on McCarthy as wild and virulent as any McCarthy himself is charged with making. To expect Mr. Evjue to be impartial on this, his favorite subject, is expecting a hen to lay a duck's egg.

The pity of it is that this is an important issue, and a really impartial



reviewer might have done a little valuable checking on some of the "facts" Anderson and May propounded. As the thing stands, we in Wisconsin realize you have simply handed a well-known and fanatical McCarthy hater a chance to air his thesis to a larger audience.

Mary T. Locke.

Mount Horeb, Wis.

Dismay & Distress

▶ Believing as we do that intelligibility is an essential ingredient of any literature that will endure, the undersigned members of *SR*'s editorial staff were dismayed and distressed by the arguments put forward in Ben Lucien Burman's "The Cult of Unintelligibility" [*SR* Nov. 1]. The highly subjective tone of Mr. Burman's article certainly did not clarify the case for which he was arguing, nor could it persuade any open-minded person yet to be convinced; the note of pique and petulance that permeated it could only give aid and comfort to those whose views on literature are diametrically opposed to his—and ours. Perhaps a worse "dead-horse" in Mr. Burman's article was the little quiz appended at the end. We scored 100 per cent on this—and so, we dare say, did most *SR* readers. Mr. Burman argued the case woefully in the body of his article; he gave it away entirely by offering as evidence material such as this.

If the case for intelligibility in literature is worth propounding at all at this late date, it is a pity that two better qualified critics, proponents of both positions, did not state the issue fairly and argue it cogently.

Zola Dincin.
Roland Gelatt.
Eloise Perry Hazard.
Peter Ritner.
Raymond Walters, Jr.

New York, N. Y.

Who Understands?

▶ "The Cult of Unintelligibility" was to me one of the most sensible and logical articles that I have ever read concerning the Joyce-Stein cults, which are often composed of pseudo-intellectuals who revel in the fog of their heroes' often meaningless jargon. It is encouraging to a teacher of literature to be able to cite such an article for additional reading to students who cannot understand or appreciate such prattle as one often finds in Joyce or Stein.

Eleanor Drake Mitchell.

Cookeville, Tenn.

Obscurantism Is a Dead Issue

▶ Attacks on "obscurity" in literature are as old as literary history itself. Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Donne, Blake, and Browning all have been accused of the bugaboo of obscurantism. Even Shakespeare is not perfectly clear, and many of his passages are beyond elucidation by scholars. The work of these men has survived in spite of their obscurity, or because succeeding generations have understood them.

In discussions of literary merit ob-

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scurantism should never be an issue. The important consideration lies in whether the artist, in his obscurity or in his lucidity, is sincere. Charlatanism is present not only in more difficult writing, as Mr. Burman darkly implies; only in the "intelligible" work it is more evident to the superficial and careless reader or critic. . . .

This dogmatic attitude toward contemporary writing reflects the mental laziness and immaturity of members of the reading public unable to distinguish between good and bad in any literary work, who pounce upon anything "obscure," good or bad, as an object of their scorn. There have been bad writers in every generation, and this one is no exception. But although admittedly more difficult, it is still our duty to separate the literary wheat from the chaff and not ignore it all because of its "unintelligibility."

DONALD B. STAUFFER.

Bloomington, Ind.

Lips of a Mouse

▶ . . . FOR ALL THE TWISTED logic and unsubtle attacks comprising Mr. Burman's criticism he has failed to recognize the existence of any ability or poetic accomplishment in Gertrude Stein or James Joyce. Let those of us who disagree with him assume for a moment that what he has said is 100 per cent correct, and that the practical brain can observe nothing in their writings but insanity. Then let us condemn him for what he has not said: a complete failure to recognize anything creative in the writings of Stein and Joyce renders his criticism sterile, and causes it to fall upon the ears of his listeners as bombast from the lips of a mouse.

VINCENT C. A. SCULLY, JR.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Gods of Nonsense

▶ THANKS TO Ben Lucien Burman for putting his eggs in a sound basket. I considered it a waste of college time and money to be told on the one hand that we were there to learn discrimination, and then on the other to have the "gods of nonsense" crammed down our throats as great.

AUDREY ANDERSON.

Upper Montclair, N. J.

Slow to Learn

▶ MR. BURMAN DEPLORES the standards of good and bad which "the disciples of unintelligibility" saw fit to canonize, and yet he would replace their cultish values with an inflexible tradition of similar exclusiveness. He would have us prefer an absolute monarchy to a Communist dictatorship. Historically, Mr. Burman is lending voice to a popular desire that art return to the classical traditions of simplicity in form and clarity in expression. But the horizon has been expanded since the fourth century B.C., and there is no turning back.

Men of Burman's persuasion would have us discard what we have painfully achieved since that time because they have themselves been blessed with an incurably phlegmatic intellect which makes them slow to learn and still slower to appreciate . . .

JACK LINDEMAN.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Not with Alligators

▶ FOR ONLY TWO DOLLARS Mr. Burman can clear up the Joyce aspects of his unintelligible nonsense by buying one of the many books on Joyce's work. . . . I'm sure Freud leaves Mr. Burman cold, and the birth trauma would irk his sensitive typewriter.

Being one of the folk, I didn't understand what a symbol was the first time I chewed on one either, but I didn't go down and discuss it with the alligators.

OTTO CRAWFORD.

Chapel Hill, N. C.

Confusion or Exclusion?

▶ . . . OUR CULTURE is not threatened by the obscurantists who remain insignificantly small. It may be threatened by the practitioners of the obvious, those writers whose sentiments and superficalities, under the guise of reality and emotional depth, perm ate our magazines and have an influence on people far beyond that of the "unintelligible" groups.

Stein, Joyce, and their several Neanderthal followers are cited for the crime of "deliberate confusion of thought." Writers of the obvious may be held for criminal neglect by their deliberate *exclusion* of thought. Which of these is the more harmful?

LESLEY MEAD.

Sacramento, Calif.

Time Capsule Needed

▶ . . . I'LL CARRY Ben Lucien Burman's article around until it's yellow with age!

FLORENCE M. BRANDT.

Haddonfield, N. J.

Down the Drain

▶ I HAVE BEEN WONDERING when somebody with an established reputation in the field of letters would stand tiptoe and slap these unintelligibles in the face. Now I hope the publishers will wake up and throw the whole egotistical, sophist lot of them down the drain. I hope that fifty years from now nobody will remember that Joyce or Stein or James or Proust or Mann ever lived.

LAWRENCE EDWARDS.

Knoxville, Tenn.

"Many Islands, Much Music"

▶ SOME UNEXPECTEDLY HEAVY CUTTING of my article on West Indian folk music [*SR* Oct. 18] resulted in some distortions which may have raised questions in some readers' minds. Cuba and Trinidad were the main sufferers.

As it stood, the article seemed to put forward the Cuban *punto* as the most important type of folk music on that island. Actually, as I pointed out in the original article, it is only a single example of *Guahira* (white-peasant) music, sharing the scene with the *Zapateo* and the *Guahira*, two folk dances of Spanish origin. More important than any of these is the Negro folk music of Cuba, which has provided the driving force for all popular Cuban music. Very significant in this connection is the music of the various African or Afro-Cuban cults, such as the Arara, the Lucumi, and the Kimbisa, and African-type fraternal groups such as the Abakwa or Carabali. Cuban carnivals have facilitated the flow of rural Negro music into the cities.

In the section on Trinidad, reference to folk traditions such as the *Calenda*, *Canboulay*, and *Belaire* dances fell to the editor's blue pencil, as did notes on origin and development of the steel band and reference to the all-important old-world cult life. In many respects these are all more important than the popularized calypso.

And just to set the rest of the picture straight, the photograph of a girl hanging onto a rafter was not that of a "Voodoo priestess," but of a young servitor of a Haitian cult in a trance state. I tried to emphasize in the article the difference between *Vodoun* and voodoo. They have little connection except in the writings of authors seeking to sensationalize the Haitian scene.

HAROLD COURLANDER.

New York, N. Y.

Speaking for the Whole Man

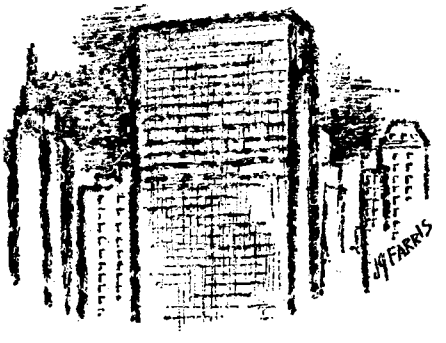
▶ HEARTY THANKS for the editorial "The Morning After" [*SR* Nov. 1]. We must cultivate patience if we sincerely wish to promote the adequate representation of the whole man in our discussions and institutions.

But we must still actively promote the increasing representation of the whole man. The steps may be short ones, but if they are in the right direction they are worth taking, and, if need be, worth fighting for. The U.N. is certainly such a step; support for Point Four is a step; freer trade and freer international travel and intercourse is a step; condemnation of McCarranism is a step; international conferences of scientists, philosophers, authors, and students is a step.

The time seems right for bolder action. Why not have an annual congress of individual representatives from all countries, without a *single* exception, to discuss possible and feasible ways and means of serving the whole civilized man? Who will second my motion?

VICTOR S. YARROS.

La Jolla, Calif.



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War. We live in an age where there is a zealous attempt in every field of science and art to examine details and minutiae. Even in histories of war and personalized accounts there is this evidence. The Military History Department of the United States adds three new titles to its huge and extensive war coverage with "Guadalcanal," "The Persian Corridor and Aid to Russia," and "The Transportation Corps" (page 48). Summing up a great military career, Admiral Ernest J. King and collaborator W. M. Whitehill give us biography, personalities, and accounts of behind-the-scene conferences in "Fleet Admiral King" (page 26). Whether in war or peace, spy roundups are the business of a professional "Spy-Catcher" as Oreste Pinto, chief of Dutch counterintelligence, so well knows (see page 35). Two books that provide an interesting contrast and complement are Bernard Berenson's "Rumor and Reflection" (page 26) and Curzio Malaparte's "The Skin" (below). Both writers know their Italian wartime locales. Berenson's reflections display a sound, searching mind exhibiting deep confidence and love for the victimized Italian people, while Malaparte reduces them to opportunists.

Of Armies & Ingratitude

THE SKIN. By Curzio Malaparte. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 344 pp. $3.50.

By P. M. Pasinetti

CURZIO MALAPARTE'S new book, in so far as its title announces its theme, is about the actions of men whose purpose in life is reduced to the simple, naked objective of saving their skins. The locale is mainly Naples and the way north up to Florence; the period is 1943-45. The form is that of a memoir, in which, however, history and anecdotes are so condensed and manipulated as to suggest fiction, or, particularly in the case of individual characters disguised under different names, the roman à clef. Also, the material is very often organized around poetic symbols, indicating a more or less contrived kind of artistry as in some avant-garde documentary films. (Incidentally, Malaparte's latest exploit, after some theatrical ventures in Paris, has been to direct a motion picture titled "Forbidden Christ.")

In a particularly horrifying passage the central symbol of "the skin" itself is used. The American troops have just entered Rome, and a man has been caught under the caterpillars of a Sherman and reduced, in Malaparte's description, to a mere bi-dimensional shape on the ground. Later they visit the monstrous corpse in the house where it has been transported. The way the writer belabors his theme is typical; for instance:

> He looked like one of those paper patterns that tailors use, or a cardboard dummy such as is employed for target practice. What upset me most was his shoes. They were crushed flat, and here and there something white was sticking through them—perhaps some little bone. . . . I laughed to myself as I thought how each of us that evening believed himself to be a Brutus, a Cassius, an Aristogiton, though all, victors and vanquished, were like that horrible thing which lay on the bed—skins cut to look like men, miserable human skins . . . I thought how that flag of human skin was our flag . . .

This was Malaparte's way of handling events also in his previous book, "Kaputt," which is the one that after a long literary career in Italy and France gave him finally a world reputation. To sum up, his characteristic form of expression is a sort of symbolic anecdote, centered often around one image (the skin-flag, the "wigs," the fish-child, the experiment-dogs with their vocal chords cut, the "black wind," and many others in this book), an image mostly of such nature as to portray a kind of shocking surrealistic horror. Those of us who used to see Malaparte at the time when he was still planning "Kaputt" heard him tell practically the whole book before we got to read it; the author's role in certain cosmopolitan circles, for instance in Stockholm, where we saw him then, was also that of a very successful and preferably shocking raconteur. Typically, when one of his listeners naively suggested that one of Malaparte's stories "just couldn't be true," I remember his saying, "What do you mean it isn't true? I invented it," with what sounded like perfect and innocent conviction.

A taste for the paradox, for the bizarre, is not necessarily suited to the tragic horror of this book's main themes. A word I have found typical here is the word "marvelous," *meraviglioso*, in the original "baroque" sense of something worthy to be marveled at. If we didn't regard even the slightest suspicion of racial belief as dangerous bunk, we would perhaps be tempted to connect Malaparte's taste for the horridly bizarre, for the monstrously strange, with the fact that he is a mixture of Mediterranean and Nordic sources of fantasy (he had a German father and his real name is Kurt Suckert). And it may be true that a writer who is out to shock you often blunts the very faculties he must be counting on. My unexpected but genuine reaction to this book was a certain amount of boredom.

To mention one other aspect of the book, the attitude of the narrator is at bottom one of despair. He is capable even of a sort of sentimentalism; and he affects capacity for high feelings (as in his affection and admiration for some of the Americans he knew during the war). There are frequent indications that his startling images and his prose artistry (his prose in Italian has in spots an affectedly classical, almost antiquated flavor) may well conceal lacerated pity. The other typical trait of the "I" in this book is a taste for self-abasement; he plays the role of the vanquished to the end.

Now, the great thing is that Malaparte is close to us, and the question of whether his books should be read as "literature" or as "documentary" is urgent. The obvious objection of the type "I was in Naples during the war and never saw those things" maintains its validity. "The Skin," by the way, caused considerable furore; there were people who wanted Malaparte thrown out of the Naples area (his usual residence is at Capri).

P. M. Pasinetti, a native of Venice, now lives in Los Angeles, where he teaches the course in world literature at UCLA.

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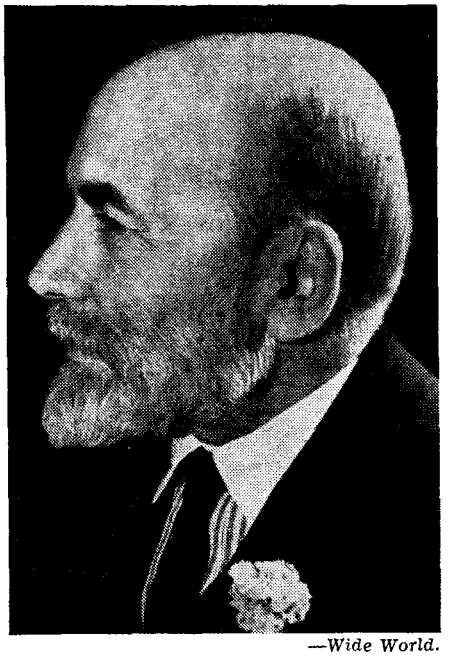
Art & Allies

RUMOR AND REFLECTION. By Bernard Berenson. New York: Simon & Schuster. 461 pp. $6.

By Robert Pick

SOMEWHERE in this book, Mr. Berenson calls Goethe "one of the completest human beings." Completeness is what the famed art historian has aimed at himself throughout his extraordinary life—or, more accurately speaking, it is the goal toward which his extraordinary mind has been guiding him. In our age of specialization the range of his interests is as stunning as in any age would be his success in weaving their various strands into a whole. It is this great scholar's unceasing fascination with the living world that gives to him, if not Goethe's completeness, the "wholeness" which is the mark of the genuine humanist. The poise of his style may impress some readers as the sign of an aged man's detachment; in truth, it shows the equilibrium attained by a lover of the arts who discerns life in art and art in life.

Against the advice of his friends, Mr. Berenson did not return to this country when war broke out in Europe. He remained in his Florence villa, I Tatti, amid the paintings and *objets d'art* assembled over a period of fifty years, amid his books and manuscripts and the unique collection of his art photographs—but also amid the Italian people whom he never had identified with their infamous masters. When the United States entered the conflict, his status as an enemy alien encroached upon his freedom of movement; when Hitler forced his ally to step up anti-Jewish measures, Mr. Berenson accepted the hospitality of a befriended family and went into hiding at their country place.



—*Wide World.*

"B. B."—"too polite to display."

This, then, is his wartime diary. A large part of its entries deal with the war situation and international affairs. While of small topical interest today, these passages leave the reader marveling at the accuracy of the picture a man could piece together while cut off from any reliable information and constantly exposed to unverified rumors. But more astounding still is the tenacity with which he kept occupying himself with the wider issues under the circumstances—with the historical roots of the war and the postwar world as he foresaw it. His fabulous memory allowed him to draw on his knowledge of history and anthropology, philosophy and belles-lettres. Having met any number of the great and near-great of two, indeed three, generations, he has embedded his reflections into those personal reminiscences. Reading his diary is like listening to the conversation of an old gentleman and *homme du monde* much too polite to display his erudition or force his views on his audience.

Like many another Westernized Jew, Mr. Berenson—who yet had lived through the Dreyfus days as a grown-up himself—was made fully conscious of the precarious situation of the European Jews only as disaster overtook them. Again and again he returns to that subject, and argues with those who, for better or for worse, wish to set the Jews apart as a group. On the other hand, he is not immune himself to racial concepts.

"Rumor and Reflection" is an informal book. It offers a fascinating insight into the working of the mind of a favorite of the gods who has made an incomparably better use than most of the gods' favors.

Mirror

By Harriet Gray Blackwell

I am so much
Her very own,
Flesh of her flesh,
Bone of her bone

That seeing her
Grow old and frail
Reflects myself,
Dimensional,

Reflects a leaf
On winter tree,
Reflects what time
Will do to me.

Five-Star Star

FLEET ADMIRAL KING: A Naval Record. By Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 674 pp. $6.75.

By C. Vann Woodward

THE United States Navy is not likely to produce another career to match that of Ernest J. King, and the history of that organization furnishes no precedent. "Having what he considered a proper ambition to reach the top of his profession," write the admiral and his collaborator, "King wished to become either Commander in Chief, United States Fleet, or Chief of Naval Operations before his retirement in 1942." He became both—simultaneously.

The year 1942, instead of marking his retirement, marked the beginning of the most distinguished and eventful period of service in a career that was already crowded with distinction. In that year he became commander of the largest and most powerful naval force ever assembled in history, and he guided the strategic course of that force through four years of warfare on opposite sides of the globe. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as the Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff, he left his imprint upon the over-all conduct of Allied military operations throughout the war.

Admiral King's book is a departure from the pattern of memoirs set by his contemporaries of the high command in the last world war. Leahy, Eisenhower, Bradley, and the others who have burst into print have confined their pronouncements pretty largely to events of the war years. King, on the other hand, gives less than half of his book to the sequel of Pearl Harbor. This is biography, or rather autobiography with assistance. When the war began King was sixty-three years old and had more than four decades of naval service behind him. He undertakes to give us the whole story which is, of course, part of the story of the recent great war.

The Admiral was unusually fortunate in securing as his collaborator Walter Muir Whitehill, director of the Boston Atheneum at present and a commander in the Naval Reserve during the war. It is not unlikely that

(*Continued on page* 35)

C. Vann Woodward is professor of American history at Johns Hopkins University. A lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve, he is the author of "The Battle of Leyte Gulf."

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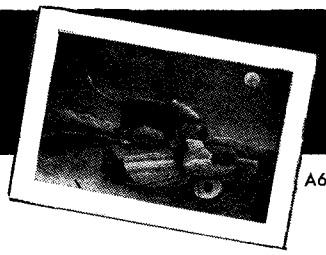
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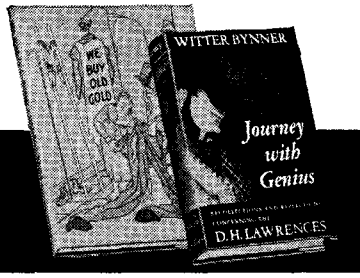

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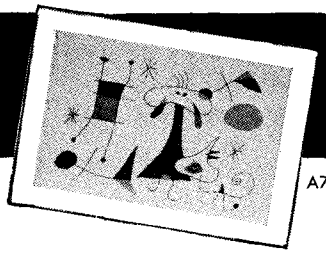
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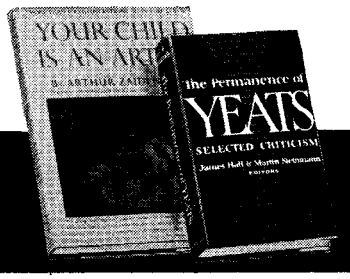

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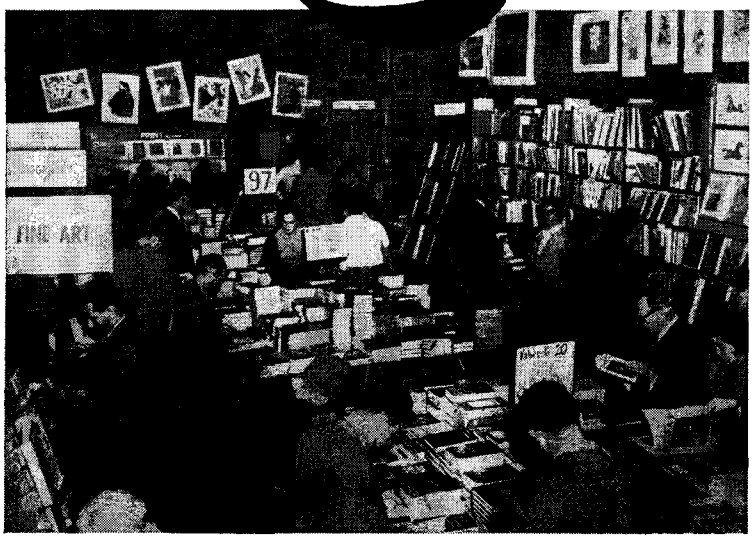

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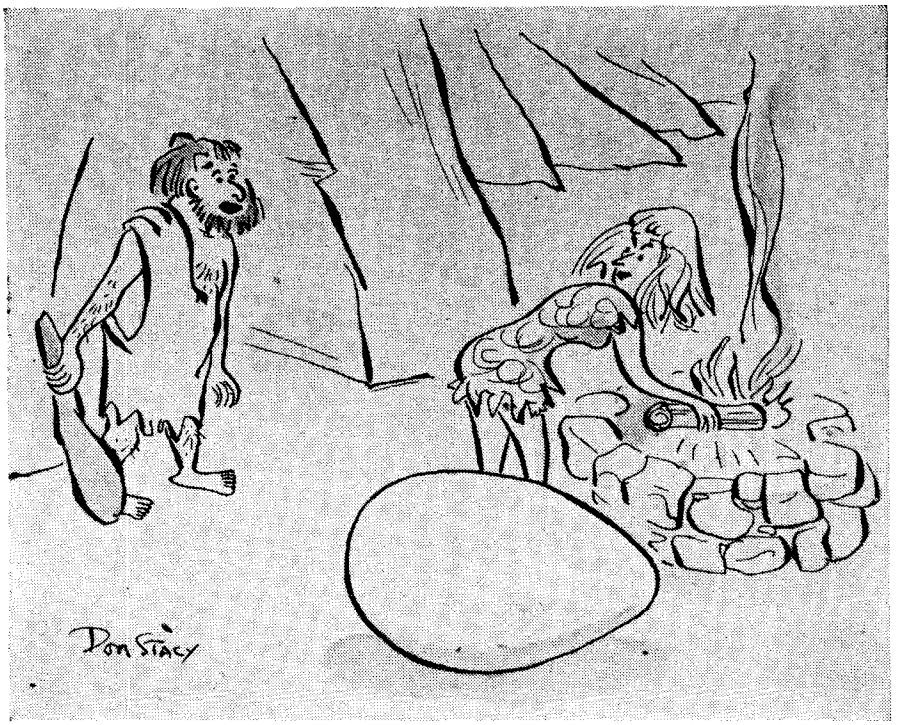
(*Continued from page* 26)

Whitehill was responsible for many of the good qualities of this book, and it is conceivable that he was able to spare the reader some of the rigors of official navy prose. In decisions regarding content, however, the commander's three stripes do not seem to have prevailed over the admiral's five stars.

Between Midshipman King at Annapolis and Fleet Admiral King at Washington there intervened ten grades of rank and nearly half a century of cruises and tours of duty faithfully performed. What with the procession of promotions, orders, arrivals, and departures, the narrative sometimes takes on the suggestion of a ship's log. Out of all the detail—rotation of duty aboard destroyers, cruisers, submarines, and carriers, duty afloat and ashore, duty at home and abroad—there emerges a clear picture of how the Navy succeeds in making a first-rate admiral out of a midshipman, when it has the proper material.

The picture we get of World War II is, of course, from an extremely topside point of view. There is no attempt to do more than sketch in the broad outlines of the main naval campaigns, but there is fresh information on major strategic decisions and how they were reached. King was present at all the great interallied conferences from Roosevelt's meeting with Churchill at Argentia in August 1941 to the Potsdam conference of July 1945. What illumination he has to contribute on these affairs consists mainly of observations on the personalities of Churchill, Stalin, Hopkins, and certain of the foreign military participants. He tends to be rather reticent on the subject of Roosevelt, though their relations appear to have been cordial.

The Admiral is known to have opposed several policies of the administration he served. He admits in these pages that he was against the breaking of General Short and Admiral Kimmel and the demotion of Admiral Stark, that he thought the policy of unconditional surrender a mistake, and that he believed the intervention of Russia and the use of the atomic bomb unnecessary to accomplish the defeat of Japan. The legend of his flintlike resistance to critics and rival branches of the service, however, is rather played down in the book. Readers of General Stilwell's diary will recall a scene at the Cairo conference when King in a towering rage "almost climbed over the table" to take a poke at Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke. Stilwell's passage is quoted by King, but the reader will look in vain for any elaboration of the incident. It is obvious that the reticence imposed by the autobiographic character of the book has resulted in toning down certain aspects of the King personality. Apart from that understandable deficiency the book is a rewarding contribution to American military history.



"Not another omelette?"

Behind the Arras!

SPY-CATCHER. By Oreste Pinto. New York: Harper & Bros. 213 pp. $2.75.

By Oliver Pilat

WHAT are the requirements for a successful spy? Since a spy-catcher, according to Oreste Pinto, who was chief of Dutch counterintelligence attached to SHAEF during the last formal war, must possess the same qualities as his quarry, it is possible to draw up a rather intriguing list.

First and foremost is a phenomenal memory, says the Colonel, who claims accurate recall of things which happened to him at the age of six months. Next come great patience and regard for detail; Colonel Pinto worked patiently, but vainly, for twelve days on one suspicious refugee in 1942 only to find the clue he was seeking in a pinprick on page 432 of the suspect's Dutch-English dictionary which he had been going over word by word with a microscope!

Courage (on the theory that no spy lacking it would dare death in lonely underground work), a gift for languages, and a flair for acting are other qualities stressed by the brave and dramatic Pinto, who is at home in thirteen tongues, including the Swahili.

A knowledge of practical psychology also comes in handy, the counter-espionage expert says, and illustrates this with what is perhaps the best story in the book. More by accident than design, Pinto collided personally during the war with Christian Lindemans, a blustering, brawling, walking arsenal of a man who had won the nickname of King Kong as a Dutch resistance leader. The Colonel was surprised to see this bravo back down in front of his own admirers. Instead of feeling relief over a narrow escape from death, Pinto sensed something strange in such behavior. He got busy and, sure enough, he was able eventually to pin a Nazi tag on King Kong, though he earned small thanks from his own government for this politically distasteful achievement.

With the exception of King Kong, who betrayed the British sally at Arnhem, resulting in 7,000 British casualties and a serious military setback, the spies unearthed by the indefatigable Colonel were fairly small fry. He offers the accounts, he says, chiefly in the hope that they will suggest lessons for the future.

Perhaps because he was dealing with the non-ideological pre-atomic crop of agents, the ten Pinto rules for

(*Continued on page* 47)

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Seeing Things

PASSION'S SLAVE

LET it be quickly said of Alfred de Liagre, Jr., that when he produces a play, whether it is "The Voice of the Turtle," "The Madwoman of Chaillot," or "Second Threshold," he gives it his whole heart. The same thing is true of John C. Wilson, as "Design for Living," "Idiot's Delight," "Excursion," and "Blithe Spirit" have long since made clear. Whether their offerings triumph or fail, Mr. de Liagre and Mr. Wilson always present them with as much devotion as if they were bound to succeed.

The care which has distinguished their individual work marks their joint production of "The Deep Blue Sea."* They have supplied Terence Rattigan's script with a setting which convincingly suggests a drab flat in one of London's poorer districts. They have commissioned Frith Banbury, who staged it with marked success in England, to direct it here. And they have surrounded so popular and gifted an actress as Margaret Sullavan with players happily chosen to make the most of both the major and the minor characters.

Yet, in spite of the affection and conviction which have gone into the staging of "The Deep Blue Sea," Mr. Rattigan's drama about the anguish of desire leaves a great deal to be desired. The reasons for this, I believe, are threefold. First, there is the matter of what Miss Sullavan does by type and temperament, and notwithstanding the sincerity of her performance, to dislocate or misplace the play's real theme. Then, there is the question of Mr. Rattigan's development of that theme. And finally, there is the theme itself and the almost insurmountable problem it presents if it is to be truly dealt with behind the footlights.

Mr. Rattigan is writing about a middle-aged woman who, because of her infatuation with a hard-drinking bounder, has left her devoted and successful husband. She knows this younger man for what he is. She recognizes his inability to outgrow the memories and vocabulary of his days as an RAF pilot. She sees through his cheapness and is tragically aware that he will desert her. But so overwhelming is her passion for him that at the evening's start, when he has forgotten her birthday, she has tried to commit suicide. Thereafter Mr. Rattigan is concerned with this tortured woman's humiliating attempts to hold her lover, with her irrational refusal to return to her husband, and with the not too persuasive manner in which she at last regains the will to live due to the encouragement given her by a refugee doctor.

Anyone who has seen "Flare Path," "O Mistress Mine," "The Winslow Boy," or "The Browning Version" knows the felicities of Mr. Rattigan's writing. Although his plots may have wobbled at times, his plays have always had their marked merits. He has shown a genuine instinct for the theatre. His awareness of quiet values has been no less perceptive than his gift for big scenes. And he has seldom failed to project his characters in revealing terms.

Mr. Rattigan's endowments by no means desert him in "The Deep Blue Sea." His rotter, so admirably acted by James Hanley, is not cut from a stencil. He is originally observed. Instead of being a hissable villain, he is a stupid weakling whose sole strength is the appeal he happens to have for women. He laughingly describes himself as an *homme fatal.* He is no less aware of his deficiencies and is resigned to them.

Mr. Rattigan's lesser characters—the ex-pilot's crony (Felix Deebank), the talkative landlady (Betty Sinclair), and the priggish young husband who lives in the rooming house (John Merivale)—are also freshly written and equally well acted. The troubles with "The Deep Blue Sea" lie elsewhere and are more basic. Alan Webb's excellence as the husband cannot hide the fact that the part he is playing is unwritten. It is just as clear that Herbert Berghof is lending the strength of his own personality to give definition and form to what is shadowy in the drawing of the refugee doctor.

AS THE married woman who has given up her husband for a much younger man, Miss Sullavan gives the most ambitious peformance of her career. It is intelligent. It finds her acting with a sustained tension new to her work. It is plainly the result of much thought and untiring effort. Yet it seems to me, at least, that Miss Sullavan is laboring against obstacles she

—*Vandamm.*

James Hanley and Margaret Sullavan—"the anguish of desire."

THE DEEP BLUE SEA, by Terence Rattigan. Directed by Frith Banbury. Setting and lighting supervised by Charles Elson. Presented by Alfred de Liagre, Jr., and John C. Wilson. With Margaret Sullavan, Alan Webb, James Hanley, Herbert Berghof, Betty Sinclair, John Merivale, Stella Andrew, and Felix Deebank. At the Morosco Theatre, New York City. Opened November 5, 1952.

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cannot overcome. Although she is right for the part in the aristocratic quality she brings to it, she strikes me as being wrong for it in other and fundamental ways.

It is impossible not to sense that Mr. Rattigan had in mind an older woman whose age increased the pathos of her surrender. Her affair with the younger man was her last fling. Since desperation was added to desire, she was the more poignant in the humiliations she was willing to face. Apparently in London Peggy Ashcroft successfully conveyed this idea of a woman trapped by age as well as passion, an idea which deepens both the bite and sadness of Mr. Rattigan's writing. Miss Sullavan is far too young and attractive to create a feeling of despairing finality. Although she cries hard and long, she could be a young actress in "Stage Door" crying over a lost part or a bad notice. She does not sob from the terrible physical and mental pains of infatuation. She wants but does not crave; hers is the health of love, not the illness of desire. She lacks that melting softness, that cushioning lusciousness, which in less sophisticated but all-conquering terms Shirley Booth is blessed with.

If Miss Sullavan could only bring to her playing of a titled lady some of the simple earth-sprung, palpitant, all-yielding qualities which Miss Booth, in "The Time of the Cuckoo," brings to her characterization of a love-starved American tourist in Venice, "The Deep Blue Sea" would gain in dimension and interest. The production would be fairer to Mr. Rattigan's intention and cover the lack of passion of his passionate scenes with all their echoes, clichés, and impersonality. The agonies of the evening might seem less pointless than they now do. Some of us, whom the calendar has robbed of romanticism, might not be so inclined to lose sympathy with the heroine and wonder why, when she knows her lover is deserting her, she does not take her husband's Rolls Royce home and enjoy the affectionate security he offers her.

EARLIER I mentioned the almost insurmountable difficulties with which Mr. Rattigan has confronted himself by his choice of such a theme as sexual infatuation when it is as utter, dizzying, and undoing as it can be in life. Shaw long ago in his preface to "Three Plays for Puritans" touched upon the difficulties of such truths of life when they are translated into the falsehoods of the theatre. "Can the theatre make a show of lovers' endearments?" asked he. His answer was, "A thousand times no: perish the thought of such unladylike, ungentlemanlike exhibitions." Shaw admitted you can have fights, rescues, conflagrations, trials at law, avalanches, murders, and executions all directly simulated on the stage if you will. But he knew, as we all know, that any such realistic treatment of the incidents of sex is quite out of the question. With the clear vision that was his, GBS touched upon the theatre's eternal dilemma and ever-recurring deceptions.

"Love," he argued, "is assumed to be the only theme that touches all your audience infallibly, young and old, rich and poor. And yet love is the one subject that the drawingroom drama dare not present. Out of this dilemma, which is a very old one, has come the romantic play: that is, the play in which love is carefully kept off the stage, whilst it is alleged as the motive of all the actions presented to the audience."

Love, in its most obsessive sense, passion as it can unhinge the reason, torment the entrails, and annihilate the conventions, is Mr. Rattigan's real subject. Where a novelist could have come to grips with it in honest descriptions, Mr. Rattigan, alas, is condemned to hinting at his theme in terms of the commonplace and decent symbols of the romantic drama, even though the last thing he wished to write was a romance in the ordinary meaning of the word. Such avoidance of truth and such substitutes for reality are, no doubt, welcome and inevitable in the theatre. Yet for this very reason Mr. Rattigan in "The Deep Blue Sea" is bound to find himself a dramatist who, instead of being the master of his medium, is mastered by it. —JOHN MASON BROWN.

Broadway Postscript

IN "Venus Observed" Christopher Fry asked why we should "never speak of the climate of Eden." Playwright Moss Hart has accepted the challenge and written a play, called "The Climate of Eden," in which he does speak of a British Guiana missionary settlement that is a combina-

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tion of the garden of Paradise, "The Tempest" 's enchanted isle, and a psychiatric sanatorium. The play is based on Edgar Mittelholzer's fine novel "Shadows Move Among Them," and is for the most part a successful illustration of the original book. Inevitably there has been a softening of the more violent events of the story. The scene in which the "shizophrenic" (*sic*) Gregory turns on the lovely daughter of the family with a razor and orders her to undress in the belief that she is his dead first wife commences as in the book. However, instead of complying and thereby saving herself, because the sight of her nude and freckled body shatters the hallucination, she merely cringes in terror until Gregory suddenly comes to his senses. Also evaded is the pungent physical humiliation the fourteen-year-old Olivia allows the earthy cook to rain upon her. Completely omitted is the incident of the kleptomaniac who must in this highly disciplined utopia be put to death after his fourth offense.

While these alterations do not spoil the play, they do sap some of its strength. That Gregory can be cured of his mental illness—an ailment which all city-dwellers know to some extent—by a gentle exposure to an idyllic way of life, is not quite as dramatically believable as desirable. As a result, Mr. Hart arrives at the end of his play unsatisfied, and feels compelled to tack on a "Member of the Wedding" ending which uses Olivia's passage from girlhood into womanhood as the denouement.

Perhaps this is just as well, because certainly Olivia as played with delightful forthrightness by Penelope Munday effortlessly captures the heart of the audience. Miss Munday uses a mannered whoop in her speech which almost becomes tiresome, but moves with such yearling grace that she must be hailed as the Audrey Hepburn of the new season. John Cromwell is warmly human in the Prospero-like part of Reverend Harmston; Isobel Elsom brings a deft comic touch to the part of his wife; Rosemary Harris has a Miranda-like innocence and beauty in the role of Mabel, who has already had a lover before she falls in love with the brooding Gregory. Lee Montague is so successful at getting across Gregory's sickness that he becomes a rather cold and unsympathetic hero.

Frederick Fox's scenery solves the complex problems of staging admirably, and at the same time exudes a great deal of the magic beauty that one sometimes finds in rustic primitive settings. All in all, "The Climate of Eden," if something less than Mr. Mittelholzer's book, adds up to something more than the usual Broadway play.

—Henry Hewes.

SR Goes to the Movies

AIN'T THE FUTURE GRAND?

—*Photos from "Life Begins Tomorrow."*

André Gide talks to J.-P. Aumont—"preparing the world of tomorrow"

SINCE we have to live in an era dominated by science, we might just as well learn what it's all about. That would seem to be the philosophy underlying two films recently arrived from Europe. The first of these, "Breaking Through the Sound Barrier" (Lopert), is a dignified, thoroughly realized—and thoroughly British—account of England's greatest contribution to postwar aviation, the turbo-jet engine. Its script, by Terence Rattigan, is literate, adult, human, and meaningful. Though fictional, "Breaking Through" was produced with the cooperation of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors and maintains a high degree of credibility. Onto a highly personal story the director, David Lean, has welded aviation sequences of great effectiveness. Aloft, his cameras repeatedly convey the immensity of outer space, and by ingenious editing he captures the feel of speed. The power in a jet motor is graphically shown by the thrashing fields of grain as the planes rush over them. Sound and picture together build the strain on aircraft as they approach supersonic speeds. David Lean is no less inventive on the ground. With a fine sense of economy he cuts from a burning plane to an open grave, from a wartime airfield to the sound of jets streaking over a rusting anti-aircraft installation. There is excitement in the film. But more important, it tells something of the human spirit—and to the human spirit. The cast, headed by Ralph Richardson, Ann Todd, and Nigel Patrick, is flawless.

Science rears its head again in "Life Begins Tomorrow" (Mayer-Kingsley), a French film—written and directed by Nicole Vèdres—that examines the responsibilities of people today in preparing the world of tomorrow. This is no ordinary picture. A young man, Jean-Pierre Aumont, is picked up in a helicopter on the road to Paris by a philosopher-journalist. Aumont, who is described a bit ungenerously as a "typical man in the street," is on vacation; in Paris he plans to visit the museums, the catacombs, the wax-works. But the journalist André Labarthe persuades him instead to spend his time finding out about the world of today, about what it is thinking and why. He arranges for him a series of visits to Jean-Paul Sartre, the biologist Jean Rostand, the architect Le Corbusier, Picasso, and André Gide. And as each man speaks, the film begins to illustrate his words. "No man is innocent of the crimes against humanity," says Sartre, and

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the screen shows "the innocents"—earnest boy scouts, idle vacationers—alternating them with scenes of poverty in Africa, death in China, the concentration camps in Germany. Rostand speaks of the achievements of the natural sciences, the possibilities of a scientifically bred race of supermen—and we see experiments in parthenogenesis, the prolongation of life, changing the sex. A final section, a visit to the Paris headquarters of UNESCO, explores the kind of world that science stands ready to deliver to us. But we are reminded that science is neutral. It can prepare a world of peace and plenty, a world where the human mind controls the machine for the benefit of all, or it can prepare holocaust.

In the meantime, we have met Picasso, the artist who finds joy in living; Le Corbusier, whose Marseilles apartments are designed for the needs of people, surrounded by space and trees, within earshot of the life-giving sea; and André Gide, who speaks amusingly, and rather superficially, of the vital role of mass communications in the world today. It is a serious film, interrelating psychology, sociology, biology, history, and art. But it is also shot through with barbs of sharp French wit. Aumont introduces himself to Sartre. "Are you a journalist?" the often-misquoted philosopher demands. "No? Well then, come in." And in its intimate glimpses of Picasso and Gide, the camera is especially revealing, even when the visits are themselves somewhat unrewarding.

"Life Begins Tomorrow" is not an easy film. It poses its question baldly: "Which do you choose, life or suicide?" Nor is its answer—so far as this film offers an answer—any easier: "Tomorrow's world is everybody's business." But there is vast encouragement in knowing that the people shown in this picture are as anxious as all the rest of us to make it a better one. Unfortunately, all of this is marred by some of the worst subtitling in years.

"KANSAS City Confidential" (United Artists), for all its titular hints at daring political exposé, is really just another cops-and-robbers thriller, somewhat better done than most and far more absorbing than many, thanks to its taut and logical story. Preston Foster plans a foolproof bank robbery; John Payne is accused by the police of complicity on the job. To clear his name, Payne hunts down the real criminals. There are some surprisingly explicit hints at police brutality, a good deal of gratuitous violence all around. The director, Phil Karlson, keeps his action whipping along at full tilt, aided considerably by George Diskant's clean, imaginative camera work. . . . Call "Way of a Gaucho" (20th Century-Fox) an Argentinian Western, and let it go at that. It transplants a routine story from the prairies to the pampas and adds nothing to it except some fine Technicolor shots of Argentina's countryside and mountain tops. Gene Tierney, Rory Calhoun, and Hugh Marlowe are the principals involved, but my own eye kept straying to Australian Chips Rafferty, who—accent notwithstanding—seemed to be trying to make some sense out of his role of an army martinet.

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.

SR Recommends

Breaking through the Sound Barrier: Reviewed in this issue.

Life Begins Tomorrow: Reviewed in this issue.

Limelight: Chaplin's new film, hailed by some as a masterpiece, criticized by others as sentimental and banal, but well worth seeing at either evaluation. (*SR* Oct. 25.)

The Magic Box: A polystellar biography of the Mr. Chips who invented motion pictures (according to the English). (*SR* Oct. 18.)

A Father's Dilemma: An Italian villager loses a dress, makes love, brawls with the town in a brilliant imported comedy. (*SR* Oct. 18.)

The Promoter: Alec Guinness scores once again, this time in an adroitly paced adaptation of Arnold Bennett's "The Card." (*SR* Oct. 11.)

O. Henry's Full House: A quintet of O. Henry stories generally well translated to the film medium. (*SR* Sept. 13.)

Beauty and the Devil: The Faust legend imbued by René Clair with his unique kind of frolic. (*SR* Sept. 13.)

Gide and Picasso—"love of life."

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Music to My Ears

THE MET OPENS WITH "FORZA"—MILHAUD BY MITROPOULOS

TO say of the opening performance at the Metropolitan Opera this season of Verdi's "La Forza del Destino" that it was handsomely designed, beautifully sung, intelligently if not perfectly staged, but that some indefinable something was absent, is merely to show how far one's expectations of this theatre have come in the two years plus in which Rudolf Bing has been at work there. Not too long ago such scenery as Eugene Berman's would have been, of itself, a cause for rejoicing; now we are inclined to take it for granted, saying: "What else?"

In choosing, for the third consecutive year, a work of Verdi as his opening new production, Bing deviated from the bold stroke of "Don Carlo" (an unfamiliar work which is very close to a masterpiece) and the solid convention of "Aida" (a familiar work and undoubtedly a masterpiece) to something on a middle ground between the unfamiliar and the familiar. Like "La Gioconda" (which will come along later), "Forza" is a work which is constantly revived but rarely brought to life. In each, a tedious story winds in and around much beautiful music; in each, stock characters vie for attention with people of blood and muscle. At best, however, "Forza" is Verdi, not Ponchielli; at worst, "Forza" is conventional, never commonplace.

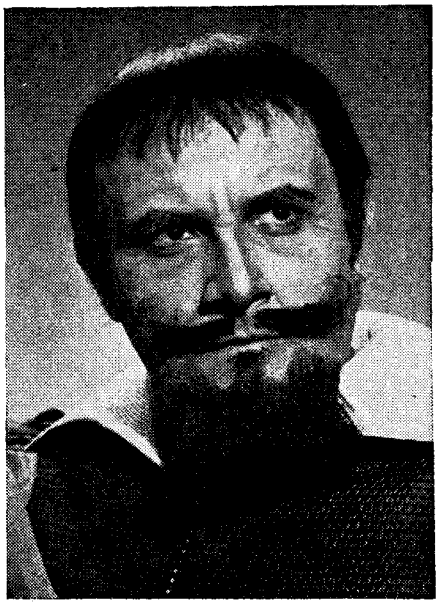
But it is assuredly, in staging "Forza," a problem of supplementing what Verdi provided, not merely realizing what he accomplished (as in "Otello" or "Falstaff," "Rigoletto" or "Don Carlo"). Supplementing may take the form of adding interest by taking away something in the score which is intrusive; and that has been done in this version by omitting the Inn Scene entirely, joining the episode of the accidental murder to its consequences in Leonora's penitence. Dramatically, little is lost; and if the lively music of the Inn Scene must be missed, there are continuity and compactness to be reckoned with as gains.

So much of the best music was magnificently sung by a singularly well-voiced (in the piano-tuning sense) quartet of Zinka Milanov (Leonora), Richard Tucker (Alvaro), Leonard Warren (Don Carlo), and Cesare Siepi (the Abbot) that the poorer music for Father Melitone was especially conspicuous in the weakish work of Gerhard Pechner. Those who recall the rolling sound and the apt characterization that Ezio Pinza once provided for this part could not but wince at Pechner's conversion of eccentricity into grotesquerie. For that matter, the reduction in the part of Preziosilla by the elimination of the Inn Scene just about brought it down to the capacities of Mildred Miller, an intelligent artist but no such virtuosa as Verdi had in mind for this relatively minor part.

Compared with the wholly integrated action Margaret Webster provided for "Don Carlo" or the same lady's fresh approach to "Aida," Herbert Graf's animation of an admittedly difficult problem was no more than acceptable. If the maximum of lurching and breast-beating was discouraged, there was an uncomfortable amount of tediously conventional business in the ensemble action which, unfortunately, coincided with the weakest music in the score.

Berman's choice of a century earlier than the one specified in the action in order to have a richer style in which to work cannot be seriously disputed; but I found his tendency to emphasize the pictorial rather than the dramatic even more disturbing than in "Rigoletto." Of itself, the Convent Scene is imposing; but it is far from the modest structure perched on a hillside that Verdi imagined. The last tableau, in the grotto, had not even good looks to commend it, and it was marred by a rock cluster in mid-stage that blocked the view of those seated to either side. The exterior for the battle scene was truly outstanding, the opening interior also first class. Soon enough, no doubt, it will have the weather-beaten quality asked for by the text, which it presently lacks. The costuming throughout was always imaginative and sometimes striking.

As an entity this "Forza" sustained the sense of animation and enterprise that Bing has brought into the Metropolitan, if only by not too flattering comparison with previous high spots. Setting aside the inequalities of production and staging already mentioned, one could only express the highest admiration for the musicality embodied in the over-all conception, the exceptional order of vocal art provided by the stellar quartet of Milanov, Warren, Tucker, and Siepi. Vocal virtue may, in the Keats phrase, be "writ in water" but one need not summon dusty reminiscences of Caruso and Scotti to make much of Tucker and Warren in "Solenne in



Leonard Warren—"touchstones redefined."

quest'ora" or of Ponselle and Rethberg to honor the present beauties of Milanov's "Pace, pace." Thus are standards renewed, touchstones redefined.

* * *

FOR his second presentation of a stage work in the still young season of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos chose the vast, intricate "Christophe Colomb" of Darius Milhaud, a novelty in America though its premiere dates to Berlin and 1930. In accordance with present procedures, the English text was considered self-explanatory of the action, with no word-by-word parallel for the eye. Too little of it could be understood for intelligent illumination of the action, too much of it was a drain on the attention for appropriate appreciation of the music.

These facts certainly were a major cause for the heavy departure of listeners at the end of the lengthy (nearly an hour and a quarter) first half. Conceivably, one might have adjusted to the noisy clamor of Milhaud's score had one been aware of its justification in the "argument." However, this was denied an audience further confused by Paul Claudel's elaborate conception of a "terrestial Columbus" and a "Columbus in perpetuity," with the action conceived in terms of flashbacks from a beginning with the aged navigator, at the point of death, reliving his life of glory and dishonor.

Thus, the initial stimulation provided by Milhaud's bold orchestral and choral writing gave way to an increasing irritation with the waves of sounds and cascades of tone that one could relate only in the most general way to the subject matter. For all the intellectual power applied by Mitropoulos to the problem, there were fun-

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damental weaknesses in the acoustical concept which placed the Narrator (John Brownlee) at one side of the stage, the two figures of Columbus (Mack Harrell and Norman Scott) in the middle, and various others enacted by Adolph Anderson and David Lloyd at the opposite side. Dorothy Dow, who sang the music of Isabella, entered and left from the wings. A similar disregard for aural focus in the Mitropoulos presentation of "Elijah" last spring had, at least, the binding force of Mendelssohn's familiar score; in this instance, one doubted at the end that anything really representative of Milhaud had been heard, despite the honest effort (and sizable budget) expended.

* * *

The deviations from previous procedure in this season's scheme of the New Friends of Music produced, at the first two concerts in Town Hall, a hearing of Aaron Copland's "Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson" and quartets of Mozart and Bartók at the opening session, and half-concert, half-dramatic versions of Purcell's "Witch of Endor" and J. J. Rousseau's "Le Devin du Village" at the second. It is too early to say that the deviations produced the uncommon number of empty seats visible.

The opera effort had its interests in the grave nobility of Purcell's score, the lightly frisky attributes of Rousseau's, but both were in the no-man's land, performance-wise, between the studentish "workshop" undertaking and the solidly professional. Since such thoughts never intruded previously into consideration of the New Friends' music-making, one can only report that the deviations of procedure have also brought unwelcome alterations of standards.

The beginning, on the previous Sunday, with composer Copland playing the piano for Patricia Neway's singing was high minded, but only occasionally auspicious. Actually, part of the problem was the same as the Philharmonic's with Milhaud: the notion that use of an English text assures the listener of knowing what is being sung. Whether the fault was Copland's, for not realizing the value of the words more completely, or Miss Neway's, for not projecting them more clearly, one could not readily say. The best of the set—"Dear March, Come in" and "Going to Heaven"—made their points strongly through a musical texture that caught and sustained an underlying mood, rather than relying, as "Why Do They Shut Me out of Heaven?" and "I've Heard an Organ Talk Sometimes," on a syllable by syllable enunciation that just couldn't be heard. —Irving Kolodin.

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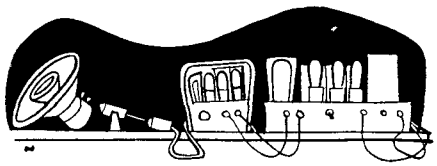

BEING occupied in the radio and television branch of show business, where it was considered foolhardy for an actor or a writer to state publicly whether he was for Eisenhower or for Stevenson unless he happened to be for Eisenhower, I shall try this week to write a short piece about the man who lost the election.

And please note I did not say the "best" man lost. I know better. Grammatically.

My concern with Mr. Stevenson is not as a politico. It's video. I believe that any man who can hold an audience of some twenty-six million as he did from eight o'clock the night of November 4 until one-thirty the morning of November 5, just to see and hear one of the most poignant and patriotic concessions ever spoken by a candidate to our highest office, is deserving of consideration by any smart big-business sponsor, whether he voted conservatively, liberally, or accidentally for Darlington Hoopes.

I am suggesting a weekly half-hour television program starring Adlai Stevenson, where as the articulate opposition he can check on the state of the nation—a watchdog of the Republic, if you will. From a business standpoint alone, considering the ready-made audience of twenty-six million viewers, to say nothing of the thousands of letters and telegrams the Governor received after the election, any sponsor should readily see the sales possibilities for any product. Especially if the commercials are handled less annoyingly than they were during the telecasts of the election returns and the conventions, where almost every five minutes it was time for a range. Or an icebox. Or a TV set.

The time is now. Now that television has gone in for so many domestic situation programs. Here is a domestic situation program with a little foreign policy thrown in for full measure.

I read in the papers where there has been talk of raising a fund to buy television time for Mr. Stevenson to speak. This, as any time buyer along Madison Avenue will tell you, is not a smart idea. The time available for such a project is not choice time. A sponsor with a network of stations is able to buy time when audiences are most available, including time for repeat broadcasts for the West Coast. And I think we are all non-partisanly agreed that Mr. Stevenson's scripts would be the same for the West Coast as they would be for the North Coast and for the South.

If Stevenson had been elected I would be suggesting a weekly half-hour television program for Eisenhower, where he as the loyal opposition could check on the state of the nation—a watchdog of the Republic, if you will. It would be the duty of both my hypothetical television stars to condemn the good and deplore the bad.

REALIZING, of course, that that which a Democrat might call good would be considered bad by a good Republican, and vice versa, I am thinking more of the actual campaign promises. In the old days of radio a campaign promise fell lightly upon the ear. Nothing falls lightly upon the eye AND ear. Since the advent of television, as any huckster worth his 15 per cent will tell you, the impact is three point something as great as that of radio.

Were Stevenson President, elected, for instance, on one of his promises to fight for FEPC, and once in office he made no concerted effort to bring about the FEPC he had promised, it would be General Eisenhower's function on his weekly program to keep asking, "How about the FEPC promised by the Democratic candidate?" Just as it would be Mr. Stevenson's function on the program to ask, for instance, "How about the reduction in taxes?" to which the general committed himself during his campaign.

The campaigning candidates win their votes by their promises. The voters, hearing both sides, decide and choose the man who promises them the government they most want. It is only fair they should get it. It is only fair they should have someone speaking for them when they don't get it.

Now that Mr. Stevenson has so successfully not succeeded in winning the election he is just right for such a television program. Even his most bitter opponents who acclaimed the campaign he carried on will admit he is not a man to place party politics above love of country. He will speak reason. Is this treason? —GOODMAN ACE.

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FICTION

(*Continued from page 20*)

western suburb from New York, with her small, successful husband. Going to call, self-invited, May dropped a small bombshell in the shape of her confidence that she should hate Sally, but couldn't; should hate her because she had been engaged to George Cutter for so long before Sally broke it up.

As Sally had never, until that moment, heard of May Johnson it was a startling bit of news. A few years before it might not have been so shattering. But suddenly, in her late forties, Sally Cutter was viewing her secure, busy suburban life, her friends, her children, almost grown, in love and no longer needing her, or not in the old way, with a cold and appraising eye. And she had been wondering a good deal too about the exact relations of her eccentric, taciturn husband and his business assistant, a woman who apparently made up in dazzling efficiency for her lack of physical attraction.

In her sympathetic picture of Sally Cutter's personal adjustments, Mary Jane Ward has achieved rather more of a character sketch than a fully rounded novel. She has already staked out her own claim, in her widely-read "The Snake Pit," on material which superficially might be considered unpalatable as popular fiction. **"It's Different for a Woman"** (Random House, $3) is in very much lighter vein and never harrowing, but in its own way displays equally well the author's sensitive and compassionate insight into feminine psychology. Women of "a certain age," when they do turn up in current fiction, are apt to be "moms" or, in the higher-income brackets, knotters of the silver cord; later they appear as pungent old ladies or *grandes dames;* for an agreeable break in the monotony of young and beautiful heroines we are indebted to Miss Ward's courage. But it must be admitted that this is a novel which will appeal chiefly to women.

—PAMELA TAYLOR.

LIBERAL'S DILEMMA: The man of rigid liberal principle comes in for something of a beating in Thomas Sterling's **"Strangers and Afraid"** (Simon & Schuster, $3.50), a bitter, biting, and sometimes shocking novel about relations between Negro and white in New York of today. Lyle Bishop is the man of liberal principle and it is Mr. Sterling's thesis that since he is without the capacity for love of an individual he is doomed to frustration and to an

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ultimate betrayal of the beliefs he has professed. That's what happens when Bishop meets up with and attempts to help Maccabee David, a Negro youth of extraordinary sensitivity and understanding who has escaped from a Southern prison, gone to New York, and there gotten innocently involved in trouble which sets the police after him again. Mr. Sterling has plotted his mounting tragedy tightly and has hammered home his thesis in tense scenes which highlight the contrast between the humane Maccabee and the inhumanly dedicated Bishop. The very strictness with which he sticks to his line becomes, however, a fault in the end, the tragedy inevitable, a solution impossible, and the counsel one of despair .

—Edward J. Fitzgerald.

FOLKSY DOINGS: When an artist paints with the primary colors, he gains in simple strength, but he loses the finesse to describe complicated personalities and emotions. Tom Ham's novel of a wagon trek from Pennsylvania down the Great Valley and on to Georgia in 1837, **"Give Us This Valley"** (Macmillan, $3), is peopled with stock characters: the shy girl who never knew what it was her mother was trying to tell her; the strong, wordless man who left his bride alone on their wedding night out of consideration (?). It makes use of a plot climax at least as old as Blackmore's "Lorna Doone." Having these faults, it must furnish something fresh and living to redeem it—and it does! The speech of the back-country people is flavored a little with the South, but as true in spirit to New England or the Far West. It is the conversation and the folk sayings that the literary connoisseur will watch for in this. For the more casual reader there are other treats—the usual melodrama.

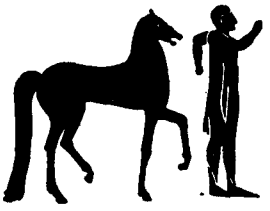
—Shirley Barker.

YOUNG LOVE: Obviously aiming at the adolescent trade, Mebane Holoman Burgwyn has drawn on motifs from "Cinderella," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Little Women" to construct **"Penny Rose"** (Oxford University Press, $3). Penny, her heroine, starts off with plenty of troubles. First she fancies herself in love with the dashing young aristocrat who lives in the mansion on the hill, and Penny's family is poor. Then her father gets himself killed and they're poorer still. How Penny saves the family fortunes, turns the run-down farm into a successful going concern, discovers that she really loves not the prince on the hill but solid dependable Dan who has been under her nose all the time, and finally gets all straightened out is Mrs. Burgwyn's story. It's told pleasantly enough if too innocently.

—E. J. F.

JUVENILE DELINQUENT: The latest exposure of what used to be called reform schools and is here called the Hamilton Training School for Delinquent Girls is contained in a highly sensational little item, **"The Wayward Ones"** (Crown, $3), by Sara Harris. Seems there's still not much hope for a girl who goes wrong young and gets sent away to a reform school. When Bessie, our heroine, gets into one she learns how to roll a lush, pick pockets, and be a successful whore. Most importantly she gets drawn into "the racket," which means she is first forced into and later embraces a life of homosexuality. This last is the principal concern of the book and most of its pages are devoted to descriptions of homosexual activity. While there is undoubtedly a social problem in our correctional institutions, and it may well take the form here indicated, Miss Harris's treatment is more designed to pander to the prurient than to enlighten the genuinely concerned.

—E. J. F.



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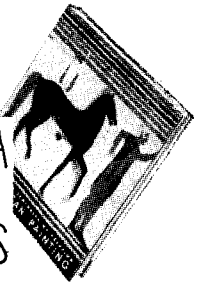

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HISTORY

(Continued from page 15)

newly appointed prioress of the recently established Ursuline convent, a well-born, cynical hunchback, Soeur Jeanne had what D. H. Lawrence called "sex in the head." After the death of the convent's spiritual director, she wrote asking Grandier to take them on. "How fascinating," Mr. Huxley notes, "even to the most respectable ladies, is the male seducer." In the imagination of his female parishioners, Grandier's amorous exploits took on heroic proportions. "A bad reputation," he points out, "is the equivalent in a female of heat in animals."

Soeur Jeanne, politely rejected, fell hopelessly in love with the "delicious monster"—whom she had never seen. Night after night, she dreamt the worst (or the best) and her seventeen nuns followed suit. Hell hath no fury like a woman spurned, and when Canon Mignon, who gladly accepted the charge Grandier had refused, told the Prioress and the nuns they were possessed, they were prepared to believe his suggestion that Grandier was a magician responsible for bewitching them. Canon Mignon sent for Capuchin and Carmelite exorcists and more exorcists. Enemas of holy water were administered to the Prioress by force ("the equivalent of rape in a public lavatory"). The public, which took passionate sides, came crowding to see the scandalous behavior of the supposedly possessed nuns. On December 6, 1633, Grandier was arrested on his way to church, pronounced guilty by thirteen hireling judges, tortured unbearably (even to read about it is vastly distasteful), and burnt to death in front of six thousand people. He died in the most saintly way forgiving his enemies, asking pardon for his sins of the flesh, and heroically denying his supposed Satanism.

Mr. Huxley is at his most analytical in breaking down the various complicated passions which combined to bring Grandier to the stake. The reader is spared nothing: here royalty breaks wind, smell the stink; here is unsufferable pain; Richelieu's halitosis; lust, in its most Krafft-Ebingish manifestations; putrefaction recorded to the last maggot. Clinically, mercilessly, Mr. Huxley rubs our noses in his conclusions: "Practically everybody is capable of practically everything."

Side by side with his erotic eschatology, Mr. Huxley writes movingly of the Kingdom of Heaven which "can be

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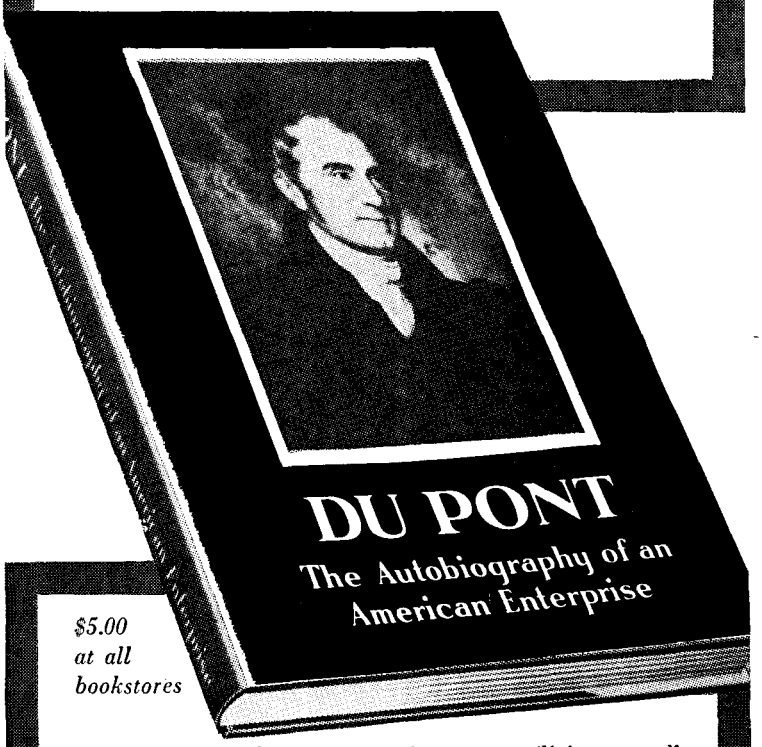

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"But for Perry, it is possible that the shore of North America from Nome to Los Angeles would today be Russian."

—WILLARD PRICE,
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made to come *on earth*, it cannot be made to come in our imagination, or in our discursive reasoning. We must get rid of our catalogue of likes and dislikes . . . of the fancies into which we retire." We can only arrive by a total acceptance, a conscious willing, moment by moment; only the *datum* of nature, gratefully received, can ensure for us the *donum* of grace. (Could not Mr. Huxley say *given* and *gift*? It seems strange to find him *avoiding* Anglo-Saxon . . .)

Surely, then, the Ground "in Whom we live and move and have our being," the primordial Fact that must be approached through the facts, can only be reached through a total acceptance also of the *consequences* of the Fall. Of which the major are sex and death. Why does Mr. Huxley so insist on the squashed dog, the copulating ape, the profligate uncle dying in the W.C.? Is not Madame Guyon so much in love with her creator that she could see Him also in a gob of spittle, nearer the divine Ground than one besotted with, and revolted by, the processes of physical life? Not since Swift has anyone so resented the fact of bathrooms; not since Donne, our decomposition. I die daily, cried Paul, and so do we all. Could not Mr. Huxley, for just one book, cease to hate that fact, which, like all others, is (or can be) an approach to *The* Fact?

History Notes

LONDON FOWWOW: The circumstances which led to the British seizure of Nova Scotia and the abortive 1709-11 campaigns against Canada also dictated the visit in 1710 of four Iroquois sachems to London. Though the Indians paid the usual official visits to Queen Anne, Archbishop Tenison, and other home guard chiefs, their trip and its fruits were unimportant, historically speaking. But Augustan London loved a new thing and made much of the visitors. The sachems, optimistically called kings, were leading subjects of both polite and vulgar conversation. Beggars, boxers, puppet-masters, and the actors of both theatres quite voluntarily arranged command performances. Grub Street ground out its regular stint of ballads and pamphlets. And all of Anne's literary giants—Pope, Gay, Swift, Defoe, Addison, Steele—penned something on the interesting subject.

Professor Richmond P. Bond's luxurious book on the visit, **"Queen Anne's American Kings"** (Oxford University Press, $5), and its transatlantic implications is comprehensive, erudite, and entertaining. He has trailed his Indians through two dozen libraries: "The sport," he says, "lay in remarking what would lead where." Bag hunters who read the text and not the skilfully separated notes will hardly realize how much sport was involved.

So witty and excursive a book must involve questions. May not Defoe have been right to attribute the "Philanthropus" letter to Mr. Spectator? Was not Swift's claim to have planned a book on the Indians merely another of his notorious literary brags? Can it be London, of all cities, where the visitors' "manners" (meaning customs) incurred "no term of contempt"; and is there no evidence to the contrary? And more generally, does not Professor Bond's inclination for wit and point sometimes obstruct the truth; and is he not too ready to offer Anna Augusta's Londoners—not really a naive or ignorant crew—Olympian condescension and head-pattings?

—ROBERT PEARSALL.

PREDICTABILITY AND DISAGREEMENTS: Professor L. B. Namier, an English historian of the very top rank, sees the processes of history as non-cyclical and in a human sense irrational, but believes that human responses to the events forming history are both systematic and predictable. Thus even though history has no real rhythms or repetitions a combined knowledge of psychology and past transactions can produce useful bases for future actions.

This sensible view and its implications are lucidly expressed in the first two essays of the collection **"Avenues of History" (Macmillan, $3)** and provide the theoretical sine qua non for a good many of the twenty-one that follow. Most of Professor Namier's essays began as casual reviews on subjects as disparate as the Elizabethan Parliament, World War II (the "Second German War," he prefers to call it—and suggests a likely Third), and the British General Election of 1950. Some, like "History," "Nationality and Liberty," and "1848," constitute genuine studies of basic problems; others range from a masterly disagreement with Toynbee to lightweight discourses on long dead and justly forgotten court ladies. Essays like those on Francis Joseph's antiseptic love affair and Lord Northcliffe's conquest of *The Times* are in the finest tradition of the leisurely review-article.

Unhappily, sometimes, as in "The Duchess of Devonshire" and "A German Diplomatist" (Kühlmann), he breaks a butterfly upon a wheel. His style at his usual best is polished and incisive; his good humor seldom deserts him except when the topic is modern Germany. —R. P.

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WAR

(*Continued from page 35*)

successful spying, and for catching spies do not seem all-embracing. Klaus Fuchs, for example, showed a frequently sloppy memory. David Greenglass revealed no flair for acting, no gift of tongues. Harry Gold was a sufferer from hypertension who walked in such constant apprehension that he seemed unable to key himself to really frightening situations. To deal with such party puppets and psychological freaks, schooling in totalitarian tactics and a knowledge of abnormal rather than practical psychology is necessary.

On the level of entertainment, "Spy-Catcher" deserves a high rating. Pinto provides some humor, quite a bit of colorful detail, and considerable suspense.

The Heroes' Way

THEY FOUGHT WITH WHAT THEY HAD. By Walter D. Edmonds. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 532 *pp.* $5.

HISTORY OF MARINE CORPS AVIATION IN WORLD WAR II. By Robert Sherrod. Combat Forces Press. 496 *pp.* $6.50.

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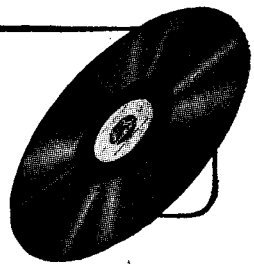

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HEAVENS ALIVE!

Who *hasn't* contributed to

SAINTS for NOW

Edited by

Clare Boothe Luce

Mrs. Luce asked a number of people to write on (or draw, if they were artists) the saint they considered most important for us today. This book is the result. Among the twenty writers represented are **Whittaker Chambers, Gerald Heard, Bruce Marshall, Paul Gallico, Evelyn Waugh, Barbara Ward, Rebecca West, Vincent Sheean and Karl Stern.**

Artists include **Salvador Dali, Lauren Ford** and (surprisingly) **Thomas Merton.**

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SHEED & WARD **New York 3**

overlook the "big picture." He does not inform us of the land and sea campaigns which paralleled the air force experience. He does not describe the intentions and the achievements of the enemy. He has used interviews of participants for the bulk of his research rather than the official records. Nevertheless, Mr. Edmonds has written a stirring book.

Robert Sherrod has written a memorial, too. But somehow it comes out more as a year book with all the names carefully inscribed and the actions dutifully noted. Certainly, his story should be a thrilling one also, but his prodigious amount of research has apparently made him unable to select and summarize. Mr. Sherrod wants to tell us everything. Referring to the "monotonous consistency in the chronological reports" of one period of operations, he proceeds to list no less than nine of them. This is the work of a reporter rather than that of an historian. There are too many good stories that remain in the book simply because they are good stories. The limited theme transforms the narrative into an almanac of ready reference, complete with eleven appendices.

The intense feeling that both authors have brought to their material is apparent. But only one of them has succeeded in transmitting to the reader the sense of the debt we owe to those of both the Army and the Marine Corps who performed valiantly on the field of battle.

The Jungles That Oozed Blood

GUADALCANAL: The First Offensive (US Army in World War II). By John Miller, Jr. Historical Division, Department of the Army, 413 *pp.* $4.

THE PERSIAN CORRIDOR AND AID TO RUSSIA (US ARMY IN WORLD WAR II). By T. H. Vail Motter. Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1952. 545 *pp.*

THE TRANSPORTATION CORPS: Responsibilities, Organization, and Operations (US Army in World War II). By Chester Wardlow. Office of the Chief of Military History, US Army, 1951. 454 *pp.* $3.25.

By John M. George

THESE three books may be considered somewhat representative of the eighty-odd volumes of official World War II history now in the process of preparation by the Department of the Army. They illustrate the variety of subject matter as well as the different levels of accomplishment which may be expected in a series so large.

Of the three, "Guadalcanal" is by far the most interesting. A history of the first offensive land action undertaken by the United States, it is a comprehensive account of tactical operations, straightforward in its presentation and understandable to the general reader. There is no sensationalism, no attempt to glorify. Rather, it is solid, sober history.

The author explains that no Army or Marine historians accompanied the forces which fought on Guadalcanal. For this reason there is an absence of battle detail in the volume. The actions of individuals and of small units, with very few exceptions, are lacking —a deficiency in an otherwise admirable book.

"The Persian Corridor" is a monograph on U.S. policy with respect to the delivery of supplies through Iran to Russia. An administrative history of high level planning and implementation, it suffers from lack of operational detail. Meetings, messages, and directives are set forth in abundance, but one searches in vain for an occasional description of the country and its inhabitants, the climate and the terrain, a road or a railway, a factory, an assembly point, a wharf. Significantly, there are no photographs, and the very few maps are poor. What should have been a fascinating account becomes a tiresome journey through the tortuous alleys of conference, plan, and decision. The volume remains, in spite of its impressive research, a jumble of facts and figures not always meaningful to the general reader. The writing is professionally competent; attempts to achieve special literary effect generally turn out "cute."

"The Transportation Corps" deals with the emergence of this technical service in the early days of the war and its attempts to assume and perform its specialized functions. There is apparently a story to be told, but it lies buried in the involved sentence structure. Trivia obscure the lines of development. The writing is amateurishly academic, repetitious, and dull. Limited to one-third its size, this volume would have more than likely been a valuable contribution to the history of World War II.

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The Latter-Day Willie

MELLOWED DOGFACE: You have the suspicion that Bill Mauldin was really not comfortable in Korea. Maybe he wasn't there long enough to get the feel of things. January to April 1952 is a pretty short time. Maybe there's a different kind of war and a different sort of fighting going on now. The Far East isn't Europe and lots of things have happened to the world and to Mauldin since those dirty days in Italy during World War II. Bill Mauldin has come a long way. He has mellowed, and no wonder. He's older, more balanced, he's famous, he's not a dogface any more. **"Bill Mauldin in Korea"** (Norton, $2.95) shows how things have changed; there aren't any dogfaces in Korea these days. They're soldiers.

Imagine Mauldin belonging to an older generation. It's true, though, and it's not a bad idea to have a man like that look over the youngsters and see how they're doing. He has a basis for comparison, and when he says things are better you can believe him. It's good to have him shocked to find so many of his own generation back in uniform again, bucking that old law of averages twice in their lifetimes. But that's as far as he goes. As he says himself, "Anyway, to get back on what I was writing about, I finally hitched a ride in a helicopter . . . and you should have seen Chillingworth's face when . . . his old buddy from Yokosuka . . . reminded him about his offer of a hot shower."

That's about the extent of Mauldin's observations. He has no ax to grind. The Army is different. The food is good. The officers are really human. Mauldin deserves to be remembered for the part he played in the change, but that was long ago and another story. As for the younger generation, they are too serious. They're engaged in business—a grim, monotonous, deadly business where the only dividends are an occasional leave in Japan and where the jackpot is the trip home. You're sure that Mauldin went to Korea to be brash and outspoken. But he couldn't get the feel of it. Times have changed.

—MARTIN BLUMENSON.

"A rifle company was in bad shape when it was down to one officer, fourteen soldiers, and three reporters."

". . . even the mud is dusty."

"Look over there and I'll show you what we missed."

"They slap you on one side and stab you on the other."

"They said they were thinking about something."

—From "Bill Mauldin in Korea."

Love letter to a Giant

Many people respect, hate or are awed by New York City.

Roger Angell, a HOLIDAY editor, has a brighter emotional regard for it; he loves the place and in this month's HOLIDAY he unabashedly tells why. We think you'll like his observations.

We also think you'll find this a penetrating guide to the city in its winter clothing and a help in enjoying New York, whether you are a visitor or one of those people who are too busy living there to see as much of it as they'd really like.

This is, of course, the second time HOLIDAY has produced a major valentine to New York. The first was E. B. White's memorable article, which appeared in April 1949, and which later became a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. We predict equally nice things for our current offering.

* * * * *

Other gift-wrapped features in the December HOLIDAY include a charming Christmas story by Ludwig Bemelmans; a nostalgic account of a visit home by Phil Stong; S. J. Perelman's portrait of Fred Allen; Havana by Hamilton Basso and the Monterey Peninsula by Herbert Warren Wind.

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TALK WITH A MOVIE CENSOR

(*Continued from page* 19)

New York's Chinese quarter, and he led me to the Nom Wah Tea Parlor. "Just sit back," he said, "and they'll bring us some food. There's only one lunch menu." It proved to be a good one, and while we lunched Dr. Flick discussed some of the problems he and his six associates encounter from day to day.

At one point Dr. Flick, a friendly, mild-mannered man in his mid-forties, said: "I suppose you might say that one of our problems is criticism. Our work is done without publicity, and we don't have the means of informing the public of the work we like to think we do on its behalf. We have to sit back and take it, and you may have noticed a lack of hesitation on the part of some of the citizenry to flail away at censorship boards. Frankly, I was glad to see someone show up who was willing to ask for our point of view."

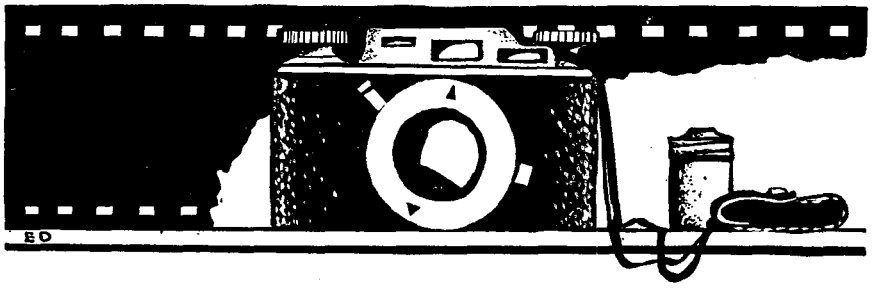
Not long before I met Dr. Flick the newspapers had reported the Supreme Court's decision on behalf of Joseph Burstyn, the distributor of "The Miracle." Hollywood, which had done little to promote its own interests in this direction, was quick to applaud the decision, even though it was a small independent distributor who had done the fighting, and even though it involved not a native but a foreign film. While the ruling neatly excised the word "sacrilegious" from New York State's regulations on film examining, the state still takes the position that it is legally entitled to ban movies because of obscenity, indecency, immorality, inhumanness, and tendencies toward the corruption of morals and incitement to crime.

Dr. Flick appeared to be, on the whole, undisturbed by the Supreme Court action. Contrary to a prevalent belief, his board did not ban "The Miracle," had, in fact, twice issued it a license. The revoking of these licenses was done by a higher authority, New York State's Board of Regents.

"Our whole board of examiners looked at 'The Miracle,'" Dr. Flick said, "and it seemed to us acceptable within the provisions of the state law. Actually the first part of the trilogy in which 'The Miracle' appeared ['Ways of Love'] caused us more worry, the one called 'A Day in the Country.' But we licensed it and there wasn't a peep from anyone about it. As a matter of fact, the only letters of commendation we've ever received came as a result of our passing 'The Miracle.'"

Motion-picture censorship came to New York State in 1921. In 1927 the Motion Picture Department was divested of political control and reorganized on a civil-service basis under the State Department of Education. Four years ago the position of permanent director fell open, and Dr. Flick, who prior to World War II had served as state archivist and who had risen in the Army from private to lieutenant colonel, decided it might be an interesting job to apply for. "I can't say," Dr. Flick said, "that my previous experience included much movie-going. I was in the habit some people have of trying to pick out the good ones and staying far away from the others. All that has changed now, of course. My special field was history, but I discovered that lack of experience in the film business was not disqualifying. After passing the five-hour written examination, I was grilled for two hours by a board set up by the State Civil Service. One question asked me was whether or not I approved of film censorship. I answered that I didn't care for any kind of censorship, as the term is generally used. That statement didn't prevent my appointment, may even have helped. On the other hand, it would only be fair for me to say that I do think some form of regulation of movie exhibition is necessary for the public's protection."

Dr. Flick thought he should amplify what he meant by that. "First of all, 95 per cent of the fifteen hundred movies that go through our office each year are not touched by our particular scissors. Hollywood's big studio product is largely untouched, mostly, I



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suppose, because they have their own self-regulating body, the producer's association that administers the production code. Foreign films are our biggest problem children, mainly because different countries are bound to have differing moral standards; what shocks us wouldn't shock them, and vice versa. We examine at least five hundred foreign pictures a year—including the Arabian delicacies that run on for twenty reels. Most of these we pass too, with an occasional snip here and there, though now and then we have to hold one up, usually with suggestions for changes that would permit us to license it. We had to ban a Chinese movie the other day. The whole movie was carefully photographed in a house of prostitution, clearly identifiable as such."

I asked Dr. Flick about the banning of "La Ronde," and he suggested I hold the question for awhile, since he wanted to discuss it in fuller detail.

"Generally speaking," Dr. Flick went on, "our real service, I think, relates to just those pictures the public doesn't see and doesn't hear about, simply because the law is in operation. There are, I'm afraid, a considerable number of small-time producers very eager to make a quick dollar by the exploitation of, let's say, the more sensational aspects of human behavior: sexual variations, drug addiction, the bawdy, and the lewd. They operate with standards common to the old-style carnival pitchmen. For instance, a truly surprising number of movies are devoted to exposing the dangers of venereal diseases, and also to the causes of the diseases. Often enough they'll have a sanctimonious foreword delivered, supposedly, by a clergyman or some other respectable figure. Most of the time the presentation is at the least vulgar, at the most obscene. We're fairly rough on these films, and pass them only after they've been cleaned up considerably. Columbia University Press recently issued a V.D. film that struck us as being very worth while and in the public interest. A few of the 42nd Street houses played it, but it bored the customers they were trying to attract. It had no exploitation angles for their purposes."

"MOST of the time," Dr. Flick said, "nudity is not acceptable. There's a good reason for this, and it's not that nudity is necessarily immoral or indecent. It's merely that if you allow one producer to get through his loving glimpses of flesh, every other small-time outfit is on your neck to get the same privileges. We try to work from the broad effect, and we also try to give ourselves a latitude of action. You might say that the law requires some interpretation on our part, and we do our best with what directives we have. I suppose the relative taste of the director or producer enters into the matter. No subject need be offensive or objectionable if presented with some maturity and forethought. Let me make one possible exception to that statement. The head of the Bureau of Narcotics has expressly stated that any film publicity given to the use of narcotics would lead only to curiosity, experimentation, and possible addiction, and a letter from the bureau came to us asking us to view all such films with extreme care. We discovered that some of these movies, supposedly crying alarm over the spreading use of narcotics, were graphic enough to show the proper method and the best place on the arm

Your Literary I.Q.

By John T. Winterich

BROTHER AND/OR SISTER ACTS

Herewith ten pairs of books, or poems, or some sort of written material that carries titles, by ten pairs of brothers, or sisters, or brothers and sisters (no collaborations). From the given titles, you are asked to identify each of the coupled authors. Give yourself five points for each half-answer, on which basis eighty up can be regarded as excellent, seventy as good, and sixty as regrettable. Answers on page 52.

1. "Polyeucte" and "Le Feint Astrologue."
2. "The House of Life" and "Goblin Market."
3. "La Vendée" and "La Beata."
4. "Thyrza" and "Baliol Garth."
5. "Villette" and "Agnes Gray."
6. "Yvernelle" and "Flint."
7. "Soldier's Pay" and "Men Working."
8. "The Name and Nature of Poetry" and "Trimblerig."
9. "The Sudden Guest" and "Sparks Fly Upward."
10. "The Will to Believe" and "The Awkward Age."

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for inserting the needle. There's some question over whether 'H is for Heroin,' a documentary made with high purposes, couldn't also have—in the long run—an adverse effect.

"Let me also make it clear that films made for educational and scientific showing do not require a New York State license. For that matter, university and medical groups, non-profit organizations which do not charge admission, are entirely free to exhibit any unlicensed movie. The provisions of the state law apply only to films that are to be exhibited commercially, and to which all members and age groups of the public are to be admitted. Private showings of obscene films are a police matter, not ours."

Dr. Flick had a few sets of statistics with him, and I glanced over them. Records for the previous year showed that nearly 1,400 movies had been approved *in toto* by the department, and eighty-three others had been approved after some asked-for cuts had been agreed to by the distributors. The total number of cuts ordered in these eighty-three pictures came to 993. This struck me as a good deal of snipping.

"Most of the cuts would fall into the broad category of indecency and immorality," Dr. Flick said; "offensive exposure, blatant sex perversion, for example. The matter of obscenity is one of the least of our problems. As far as foreign films are concerned, the U.S. Customs will not allow entrance of films that are obscene in whole or in part. The Motion Picture Division's standards are not puritanical, but a little less cleavage exposure isn't going to harm the public seriously. By cutting out some of that sort of thing we can also cut out a little of the exploitation problem—that is, the sensational emphasis. We might even help to make certain movie houses seem less like the exteriors of carnival side-shows—the fleshy posters, for instance."

"Our passing a film," Dr. Flick continued, "doesn't necessarily imply our approval of it. It means simply that the state statutes have been adhered to. Sometimes a movie may seem harmless in itself, but a whole cycle of such movies could very well have an adverse effect. It's that *cumulative* effect that we have no way of touching. Crime cycles, for instance. We looked at one crime "shocker" recently very carefully, but there was no legal justification for withholding a license from it. A good many people were wise enough to keep their children away from this picture, but I suspect most weren't. Then there's the cumulative effect on mores and habits resulting from the unrealistic and downright fantastic portrayal of love and marriage, let's say the whole mating instinct. We can't ban movies for what a director does *not* put in."

"Does that mean that you aren't entirely satisfied with the censorship law as it now exists?" I asked.

"Now that's a difficult question," Dr. Flick said, "and if you don't mind I'll take a roundabout way towards answering it. We might bring up the case of 'La Ronde,' which, frankly, I think is a well-meant and a well-made movie. We did not, could not, issue it a license, and all the various cuts the distributor was almost overeager to make still didn't get it to the point where we felt we could legally pass it.

"The movie deals with variances in moral standards and sexual behavior. While moral standards are generally a matter of geography, the time, and individual interpretation, in America it is held that the basis of our way of life is the family. Anything that disrupts the standards of normal family life, that breaks down our accepted moral structure, is considered against the law. This is the interpretation of the law that we used, and the ruling was made."

THE lawyer who is arguing the case for "La Ronde" makes the point in her brief that censors as a group are not particularly qualified to decide whether a given film is immoral or moral, and that since the law protects the public against the dissemination of obscene and indecent matter, it is more a police problem than one for a censorship body. However, a good many people opposed to censorship in principle do not look kindly upon police control of the motion picture.

As we talked I had the impression that Dr. Flick occasionally is impelled to attempt to equate two sets of principles in regard to his "problem children" movies. He and his six civil service assistants (all of whom spend all day long viewing movies) had seen and appreciated "La Ronde"; all had agreed, however, that it was contrary to the provisions of the law. "The weak and the depraved are part of the community, too," he said, "and so are young people still going through the process of forming moral standards. Because anyone may pay his way into the theatre, the law takes the position

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Pierre and Thomas Corneille. 2. Dante Gabriel and Christina Rossetti. 3. Anthony and T. Adolphus Trollope. 4. George and Algernon Gissing. 5. Charlotte and Anne Brontë. 6. Frank and Charles G. Norris. 7. William and John Faulkner. 8. A. E. and Laurence Housman. 9. Christopher and Oliver La Farge. 10. William and Henry James, Jr.

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that the public is entitled to a certain measure of protection. I mentioned before that I was against censorship as it is loosely understood, the vicious kind that strikes us as totalitarian, and it would seem to me possible under a reinterpretation of the law and under controlled conditions that 'La Ronde' might be shown. It's my personal feeling that the present New York law doesn't give us enough room to move around in."

Recently the distributor of "La Ronde" brought his case before the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court. In a touch-and-go decision Dr. Flick's ruling, backed by the Board of Regents, was upheld. Two further appeals are possible; should it eventually reach the U. S. Supreme Court, a major clarification on the entire question of public precensorship of films is probable. Meanwhile, I learned from Dr. Flick that he and other members of his department have been paying marked attention to the British system of motion-picture "regulation." This setup, in addition to licensing movies, places them in one of three categories, "U," "A," or "X."

The last of these categories was introduced two years ago, and was designed to cover films considered wholly adult (or wholly *for* adults) and from which, in the view of the British Film Board, "children under sixteen should be excluded." Thus "La Ronde" was passed with an X certificate and was free to garner its many honors. Ironically, a number of American films, given the Production Code seal of approval and passed by American censorship boards, were also given X certificates. One of these movies was the American version of "M": another was "The Sound of Fury." British children, it thus appears, are better protected than our own.

The British "A" category makes the parents partners in the business of censorship. Children may be admitted to "A" films, but only if accompanied by a parent or a bona-fide legal guardian. In effect, the British board says to the parents: "This film is not in our view one which could be generally regarded as suitable for all children under sixteen, though it may be suitable for some, having regard for their age and mental development. You, as the parents, knowing your own children, should be in a position to decide this question."

The "U" category gives a movie a clean bill of health, and everyone is entirely welcome to see it.

Dr. Flick told me that he approved, in general, of the British system, and would advocate adoption of a similar one by New York State. He would go one step further and provide a "C" category—meaning "recommended for children."

One drawback to the British involves the exploitation of the X category by exhibitors hoping to capitalize on the "adults only" label. "The X-iest show in town," a London theatre recently advertised. Other exhibitors shun X movies out of an unwillingness to lose the family trade. The problem is of no great dimension, since no more than eight or ten movies a year are tagged with an X. Dr. Flick felt that this problem need not be a consequential one here. "We'd just mix them. X might mean a crime movie, a frankly treated marital situation, or some hitherto taboo subject treated with forthrightness and maturity. That portion of the public equating X with sex would soon grow confused."

Dr. Flick was open-minded on how

The Lonely Star

By Fern Maddox

WITH one breath
The earth dropped
Far down . . .
Wings lifted—motor stalled—suspended life;
Stars stared
Impudently like
Cold faces
Pressed to window panes at night;
One flaming dash
Through space
And time . . .
The villagers said a star lost its moorings;
He knew that
I would know
That moment . . .
I did.

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the New York laws might be modified and at the same time serve as a model for other film regulatory bodies. "It would, of course, require the introduction of a carefully worked out bill at a session of the State Legislature. Perhaps a responsible citizen's group formed for the purpose of seeking the enactment of such a law might be the best way of going ahead on this. If something of that sort doesn't develop soon, I think I'd like to draft the language of such a bill and see what support exists for it. I ought to say, though, that even if adopted, such a law wouldn't prevent the non-licensing of certain movies. I think it important to watch for those that are patently injurious to the public health. There are a few unscrupulous people in the field, and they shouldn't be the benefactors of a liberal law. Actually, the people we'd like to help are the talented craftsmen who keep the motion-picture form moving forward, and who want and ought to feel free to tackle mature and artistic subjects without interference from public or private bodies, and from pressure groups. The Motion Picture Division likes to feel it's a help and not a hindrance to those people."

Dr. Flick wondered if technical advances wouldn't soon multiply the movie censor's problems. He had been invited to a showing of some three-dimensional movies and had been impressed with the pictorial realism of some of the scenes. "Seeing a love scene in three dimensions makes you feel like you're intruding. Why, if we snipped out anything, we might get guilt feelings. Might be like blotting out real people. Well, we'll face that problem when it arrives."

We had a mild argument about the paying of the check, but Dr. Flick was firm and won out. "If I treat, I might get quoted more accurately," he said.

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The Film Forum

REALITY REVISITED

The Saturday Review's Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.

EDITOR'S NOTE. *Whatever else it may harbor, California is also the home of a busy number of experimentalists working independently among themselves to produce some original, and some not so original, visual and sound interpretations on film. This week's selection of films uses photographic reality as its base of operations. In December some new experiments in abstraction and animation will be reviewed.*

NOTES ON THE PORT OF ST. FRANCIS. *Produced by Frank Stauffacher. Distributed by A.F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y. (22 min.)*

In many ways this is the kind of creative documentary work the British were experimenting with back in the Thirties. Primarily it is a pictorial work, showing scenes of San Francisco streets and suburbs, people and buildings, ocean and fog—"a confusion of varied and incongruous images." The camera work involves a number of up-and-down panning shots, to relate to the topography of the city; the cross-cutting in the arrangement of shots is more elaborate than is typical of today's factual documentaries. Many of the pictures are in themselves quite beautiful and well composed (water bursting against the rocks, fog rolling in over the city, rows of old houses with rounded-window fronts.) Only a few of the experimentalists' usual camera tricks are employed—and to their fullest in such a delightful scene as the slow-motion tortilla-making.

The sound track is enriched by an abundance of "live" noises in streets and harbor scenes, by an excellent musical accompaniment, and by a vivid commentary selected from a text written by Robert Louis Stevenson when he visited San Francisco in 1882. My one complaint is that Vincent Price delivers the narration in what seems to me too unctuous a voice for this (or any other) film.

Elements of Stauffacher's earlier films can be seen much improved in this new one. His earlier "Zigzag" (7 min.) is a rather hit-or-miss attempt to make abstract meaning out of city neon signs, sometimes not too well synchronized to the music. His "Sausalito" (10 min.) is a poetic and dreamy attempt to reveal the secrets of a town and its people—sometimes with great perception and beauty, but just as often with questionably enigmatic slow motion or other affected infatuations. Both films can also be rented from A.F. Films, and make an exciting introduction to Stauffacher's newest film.

In "Notes on the Port of St. Francis" there is no trickiness for its own sake; meaning dominates the effects, and makes them serve. Time is neither distorted nor forced into past, present, and future, but is allowed to flow freely, like the sea which in a sense created the city. The total feeling, unlike most experimental films, is one of warmth, concern, and definite control of its material and techniques.

AN EXPERIMENT IN FILM AND MUSIC #3. *Produced by Burton Wilner and Marco Montemezzi and George Woodward. Distributed by Kinesis, Inc., 566 Commercial St., San Francisco 11, Calif. (about 10 min.)*

You can't put a finger on this film to say what, if anything, makes this a film. Intentionally without story or plot, it links photographic motion to recorded (but unfamiliar) modern music, using a variety of devices which are not particularly new in themselves—slow motion, negative for positive, exaggerated close-ups, a man lying in bed with a dripping hand, a woman lying on a beach with her hair rising and falling in the waves, bare mannikins in a store window, a street sign saying "Are You Saved?" The most original part was the closing shot—a door *opening out* at an upper right angle away from the audience.

HOTEL APEX. *Produced by Weldon Kees. Distributed by Kinesis, Inc., see above. (10 min.)*

There is decided unity and purpose in this abstract photographic study of an abandoned dwelling which seems to be situated in a dump yard. The film is almost a document, but not quite—it doesn't stay still long enough to really look at anything. There are some fine interior shots of wooden floors and walls, some rather studied shots of casually placed newspapers and familiar photographs. Something about the film is reminiscent of some of the still photographs of Walker Evans, who, however, had an infinitely more discerning and direct eye to the camera. A number of people who are familiar with Weldon Kees's painting and writing will be eager to see this first film of his—and chances are they will find it as I did, more amorphous than analytic. There is a piano accompaniment and most of the footage I saw seemed much overexposed.

BOP SCOTCH. *Produced by Jordan Belson. Distributed by Kinesis, Inc., see above. (4 min., color)*

Here abstraction is pursued through the familiar—close-up shots of manhole covers, side-walk patterns, cobblestone streets, fences, marble apartment entrances, and the like. Color and pattern in themselves are delightfully original and playful, but were needlessly sacrificed in the process of rapid-editing the visual material to a rather orthodox score of jazz music.

—CECILE STARR.

*For rentals consult the list of *SRL* Film Referral Libraries, available at 10c a copy from Film Department, Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

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THE FUTURE OF WISDOM IN AMERICA

(*Continued from page* 10)

doubt too whether any other convention we can obtain may be able to make a better constitution. For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views. From such an Assembly can a perfect production be expected? * * * Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best."

OUT of such a temper alone can come any political success which will not leave behind rancor and vindictiveness that is likely so deeply to infect its benefits as to make victory not worth while, and it is a temper best bred in those who have at least what I like to call a bowing acquaintance with the "humanities." For these are fitted to admonish us how tentative and provisional are our attainments, intellectual and moral; and how often the deepest convictions of one generation are the rejects of the next. That does not indeed deny the possibility that, as time goes on, we shall accumulate some body of valid conclusions; but it does mean that these we can achieve only by accumulation; that wisdom is to be gained only as we stand upon the shoulders of those who have gone before. Just as in science we cannot advance except as we take over what we inherit, so in statecraft no generation can safely start at scratch. The subject matter of science is recorded observation of the external world; the subject matter of the statecraft is the soul of man, and of that too there are records—the records of which I refer to here. The imagination can be purged and the judgment ripened only by an awareness of the slow, hesitant, wayward course of human life, its failures, its successes, but its indomitable will to endure.

I cannot but think that we of this generation are politically in especial need of such education. Our nation is embarked upon a venture, as yet unproved; we have set our hopes upon a community in which men shall be given unchecked control of their own lives. That community is in peril; it is invaded from within, it is threatened from without; it faces a test which it may fail to pass. The choice is ours whether, when we hear the pipes of Pan, we shall stampede like a frightened flock, forgetting all those professions on which we have claimed to rest our polity.

God knows there is risk in refusing to act till the facts are all in; but is there not greater risk in abandoning the conditions of all rational inquiry? Risk for risk, for myself I had rather take my chance that some traitors will escape detection than spread abroad a spirit of general suspicion and distrust, which accepts rumor and gossip in place of undismayed and unintimidated inquiry. I believe that that community is already in process of dissolution where each man begins to eye his neighbor as a possible enemy, where nonconformity with the accepted creed, political as well as religious, is a mark of disaffection; where denunciation, without specification or backing, takes the place of evidence; where orthodoxy chokes freedom of dissent; where faith in the eventual supremacy of reason has become so timid that we dare not enter our convictions in the open lists to win or lose. Such fears as these are a solvent which can eat out the cement that binds the stones together; they may in the end subject us to a despotism as evil as any that we dread; and they can be allayed only in so far as we refuse to proceed on suspicion, and trust one another until we have tangible ground for misgiving.

The mutual confidence on which all else depends can be maintained only by an open mind and a brave reliance upon free discussion. I do not say that these will suffice; who knows but we may be on a slope which leads down to aboriginal savagery. But of this I am sure: if we are to escape, we must not yield a foot upon demanding a fair field, and an honest race, to all ideas. "Blame not before thou hast examined; understand first and then re-

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MURDER OF A REDHAIRED MAN *Mary Plum* (Arcadia: $2.50)	Everglades gal, nearly done in, gets Washington job; death invades Congressman's home.	Some structural weaknesses, but local color good, told with pleasant sincerity.	Medium
THE CASE OF THE SULKY GIRL *Erle Stanley Gardner* (Morrow: $2.50)	Second vol. in Collectors' Edition—reissue of works of ESG; this one first appeared in 1934.	Contains first big Perry Mason trial scene, specialty in which he has outstripped all competition.	Good as ever
SILVER DOLL *Blaire Treynor* (Holt: $2.50)	Calif. slot-machine king (gentle type) tangles with politics, Hollywood, sundry dames.	Smooth job, with authentic ring; good humorous touches.	Breezy
IT'S HER OWN FUNERAL *Carol Carmac* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Old gal in English manor (both museum pieces) dies untimely; Rivers of the Yard takes it.	Characters agreeable or nicely disagreeable; slow-motion in spots, good pace at end.	Plodding but pleasant
NETS TO CATCH THE WIND *Delores Hitchens* (Crime Club: $2:50)	So. Cal. cop's widow sets out to avenge his murder; path beset by booby traps.	Painstaking job that has its moments, but overruminative in spots.	Average plus
KISS THE KILLER *Joseph Shallit* (Lippincott: $2.50)	Teen-age reefer peddling leads to violence involving some of best people in Philadelphia.	Dan Morrison, Youth Center operator, and cops break it up; pace fair to brisk.	Satisfactory
THE KEY MAN *Clarence Budington Kelland* (Harper: $2.75)	TV producer Pete Martin finds self in middle when *femme fatale* horns into show.	Video background nicely sketched; cast (including cops) competently drawn.	Smooth
THE HUNTED WOMAN *Martha Albrand* (Random: $3)	Czech gal and tot, fugitives in Switzerland, dodge Commie hubby; Yank historian is hero.	Lad crux of international tangle; locale expertly handled.	Tense in spots
THE SLEEP IS DEEP *Hugh Lawrence Nelson* (Rinehart: $2.50)	Double slaughters jar swank Colorado family; pvt. eye and regular law look things over.	Moves nicely after reader straightens out large cast; adult, conscientious job.	*Call it good*

—SERGEANT CUFF.

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(Continued from page 57)

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I AM ASSEMBLING and editing for publication the letters of the late Charles Macomb Flandrau. I should be grateful to hear from anyone who has letters or who knows of any written by him. Any anecdotes or reminiscences concerning him would also be appreciated. I shall return anything sent to me if requested. Address: Mrs. Blair Flandrau, 13 High St., Farmington, Conn.

WANTED: BOSS who requires talents of secretary possessing way with words and people. Box L-962.

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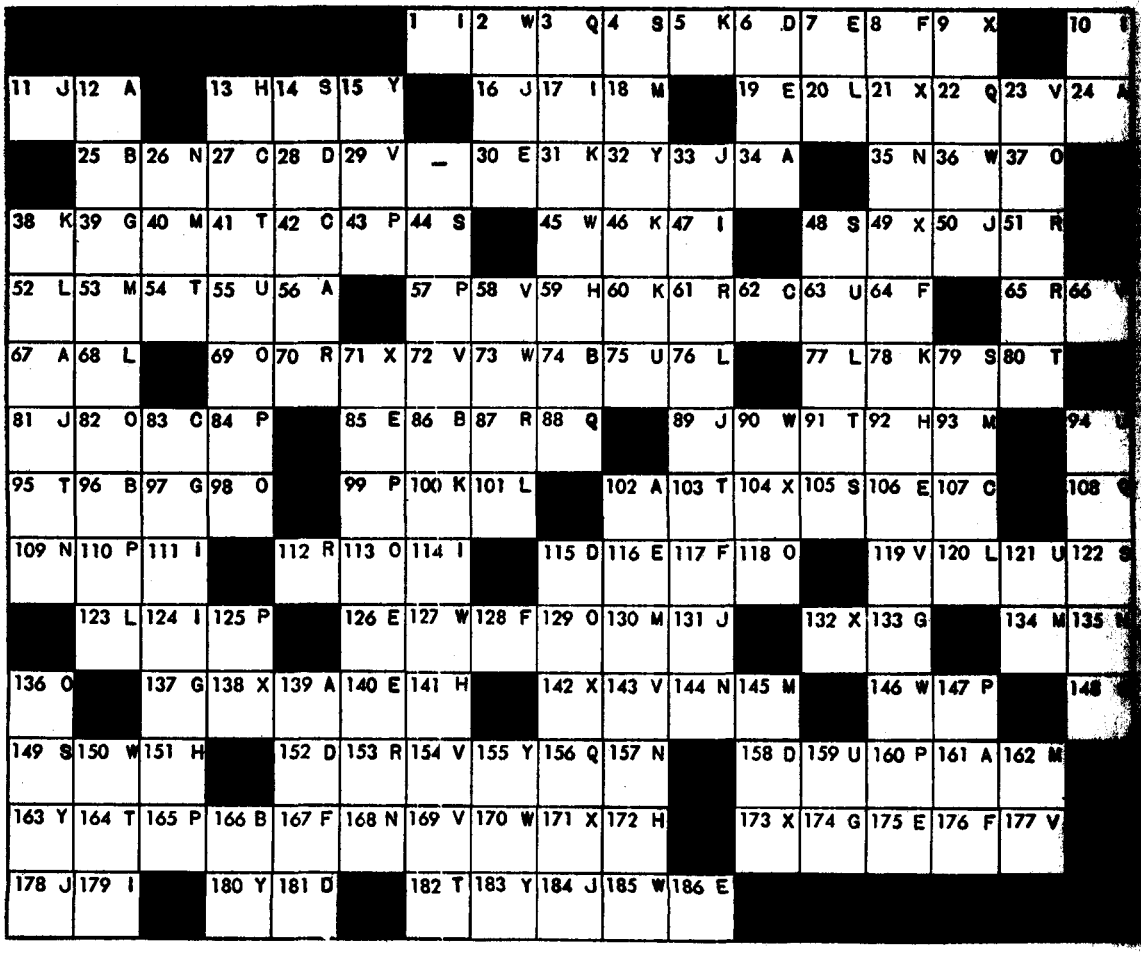
DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 97

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Destitute of teeth.	12 24 67 34 56 102 139 161
B. Ship having her upper deck cut away and thus reduced to a lower class (nautical history).	166 25 74 86 96
C. American portrait painter (1869- ; Elihu Root, R. E. Lee, Wm. Howard Taft, etc.).	42 27 107 83 62
D. Bell-shaped glass used as air-tight cover, esp. in cookery.	115 28 158 152 6 181
E. Boxer weighing 175 pounds or more.	126 186 116 175 106 85 140 7 30 148 19
F. Just; entirely; scarcely.	117 167 128 176 8 64
G. The escolar.	97 137 39 174 133
H. The works of Plotinus, as published by his pupil Porphyry.	151 141 92 172 135 59 13
I. He painted "Washington Crossing the Delaware" (1813-84).	1 17 10 124 114 47 179 111
J. Ancient Syrian goddess thought to be Jeremiah's "queen of heaven."	89 131 11 178 184 50 33 81 16
K. Specter to frighten children.	31 100 5 78 38 46 60
L. Distinctive peculiarity of a thing.	52 20 120 76 101 123 77 68

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. Said of a neglected garden, as to the overgrowth.	53 162 134 130 40 18 93 145
N. Plugs up.	109 157 35 144 26 168
O. One of Egypt's Hyksos.	136 113 37 118 82 98 69 129
P. Any woman supposed to have powers of divination.	165 84 160 99 147 43 110 125 57
Q. Evening in Germany.	3 108 88 22 156
R. Place where flax is soaked, in manufacture.	153 61 65 112 70 87 51
S. Irish woman novelist (1824-77).	14 105 48 149 4 79 44 122
T. English war correspondent of 19th cent. who wrote his last two books under spiritualistic influence of his deceased wife.	91 103 54 164 95 182 41 80
U. To make ready; attend to animals.	159 75 94 121 63 55
V. Usually the larger and more representative branch of a bicameral legislature (2 wds.).	72 143 119 23 177 66 154 58 169 29
W. Enamored of (3 wds.).	73 185 90 127 150 2 45 170 146 30
X. Special technique for curling modern woman's hair (2 wds.).	138 132 173 142 49 21 104 71 171 9
Y. Given to pushing rudely along with the arms.	32 183 180 163 155 15



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 14 of this issue.

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